MEMORIES OF MIDNIGHT

In The Other Side of Midnight Sidney Sheldon created one of
his most unforgettable characters: Constantin Demiris, billionaire,
art lover, womanizer . . . and killer. To Noelle, the woman
who betrayed him, and Larry, the man who stole her, Demiris
brought a chilling retribution. Now, in Memories of
Midnight, he confronts the problem of someone else he believes has stayed
alive too long.

Greece, 1948. In the seclusion of a remote convent a young
woman emerges from the trauma of memory loss. To Catherine
Alexander, Larry's widow, Demiris seems a benefactor, the
man who helps her build a life again. She knows that Larry and
Noelle are dead but not who was responsible. Nor that Demiris'
desire for revenge is unquenched; that there is a last, unsilenced
victim.

In this atmosphere of deception, Catherine's move to London
seems just another example of Demiris' good nature. Set down
in a strange and unsettling environment she cannot guess the
fate her benefactor has in store, or that her life is inextricably
bound up with other victims of his mighty ego.

Moving from the exotic shores of the Mediterranean to postwar
London, Memories of Midnight is the compelling portrayal

of
one woman's fight against a terrifying destiny. Sidney
Sheldon's
genius as a master storyteller has never been more
powerfully
displayed.

1

By the same author

IF TOMORROW COMES

MASTER OF THE GAME

RAGE OF ANGELS

BLOODLINE

A STRANGER IN THE MIRROR
THE OTHER SIDE OF MIDNIGHT

THE NAKED FACE

WINDMILLS OF THE GODS

THE SANDS OF TIME

SIDNEY SHELDON

*,!

MEMORIES OF
MIDNIGHT

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For Alexandra
with Love

v Sing me no songs of daylight,
For the sun is the enemy of lovers
Sing instead of shadows and darkness,
And memories of midnight

sappho

grow
Prologue

Kowloon May
1949

'It must look like an accident. Can you arrange that?'
It was an insult. He could feel the anger rising in him.
That
was a question you asked some amateur you picked up from
the
streets. He was tempted to reply with sarcasm: Oh, yes, I
think
I can manage that. Would you prefer an accident indoors? I
can
arrange for her to break her neck falling down a flight of
stairs. The dancer in Marseilles. Or she could get drunk and

drown in
her bath. The heiress in Gstaad. She could take an
overdose of
heroin. He had disposed of three that way. Or, she could
fall
asleep in bed with a lighted cigarette. The Swedish
detective at
L'Hótel on the Left Bank in Paris. Or perhaps you would
prefer
something outdoors? I can arrange a traffic accident, a
plane
crash, or a disappearance at sea.
But he said none of those things, for in truth he was
afraid of
the man seated across from him. He had heard too many
chilling
stories about him, and he had reason to believe them.
So all he said was, 'Yes, sir, I can arrange an accident.
No one
will ever know.' Even as he said the words, the thought
struck
him: He knows that I'll know. He waited.
They were on the second floor of a building in the walled
city
of Kowloon that had been built in 1840 by a group of
Chinese
to protect themselves from the British barbarians. The
walls had
been torn down in the Second World War, but there were
other
walls that kept outsiders away: Gangs of cut-throats and
drug
addicts and rapists roaming through the rabbit warren of
crooked, narrow streets and dark stairways leading into
gloom.
Tourists were warned to stay away, and not even the
police would
venture inside past Tung Tau Tsuen Street, on the
outskirts. He
could hear the street noises outside the window, and the
shrill
and raucous polyglot of languages that belonged to the
residents
of the walled city.

The man was studying him with cold, obsidian eyes. Finally he spoke. 'Very well. I will leave the method to you.'
'Yes, sir. Is the target here in Kowloon?'
'London. Her name is Catherine. Catherine Alexander.'

A limousine, followed by a second car with two armed bodyguards,
drove the man to the Blue House on Lascar Row, in the Tsim Sha Tsui area. The Blue House was open to special patrons
only. Heads of state visited there, and movie stars, and presidents
of corporations. The management prided itself ori discretion.
Half a dozen years earlier, one of the young girls who worked
there had discussed her customers with a newspaperman, and she was found the next morning in Aberdeen Harbor with her tongue cut out. Everything was for sale in the Blue House: virgins, boys, lesbians who satisfied themselves without the 'jade
stalks' of men, and animals. It was the only place he knew of
where the tenth-century art of Ishinpo was still practiced. The
Blue House was a cornucopia of forbidden pleasures.
The man had ordered the twins this time. They were an exquisitely matched pair with beautiful features, incredible
bodies, and no inhibitions. He remembered the last time he had
been there . . . the metal stool with no bottom and their soft
caressing tongues and fingers, and the tub filled with fragrant
warm water that overflowed onto the tiled floor and their hot
mouths plundering his body. He felt the beginning of an erection.
'We're here, sir.'

Three hours later, when he had finished with them, sated and
content, the man ordered the limousine to head for Mody

Road.
He looked out the window of the limousine at the sparkling
lights of the city that never slept. The Chinese had named
it

Gau-lung nine
dragons, and he imagined them lurking in the
mountains above the city, ready to come down and destroy
the
weak and the unwary. He was neither.

They reached Mody Road.
The Taoist priest waiting for him looked like a figure
from an
ancient parchment, with a classic faded oriental robe and
a long,
wispy white beard.
'Jou sahn.'
'Jou satin.'
'Gei do chin?'
lYatchihn:
Vow.'
The priest closed his eyes in a silent prayer and began
shaking
the chim, the wooden cup filled with numbered prayer
sticks. A
stick fell out and the shaking ceased. In the silence, the
Taoist priest consulted his chart and turned to his visitor.
He spoke in
halting English. 'The gods say you will soon be rid of
dangerous
enemy.'
The man felt a pleasant jolt of surprise. He was too
intelligent
not to realize that the ancient art of chim was merely a
superstition.
And he was too intelligent to ignore it. Besides, there
was another good luck omen. Today was Agios Constantinous
Day, his birthday.
'The gods have blessed you with good/ung shui.'
'Do jeh:
'Hou wah.'

Five minutes later, he was in the limousine, on his way to

Kai
Tak, the Hong Kong airport, where his private plane was waiting
to take him back to Athens.

Chapter 1
»

loannina, Greece July
1948

She woke up screaming every night and it was always the same
dream. She was in the middle of a lake in a fierce storm and a
man and a woman were forcing her head under the icy waters,
drowning her. She awakened each time, panicky, gasping for
breath, soaked with perspiration.
She had no idea who she was and she had no memory of the
past. She spoke English but
she did not know what country
she was from or how she had come to be in Greece, in the small
Carmelite convent that sheltered her.
As time went by, there were tantalizing flashes of memory,
glimpses of vague, ephemeral images that came and went too
quickly for her to grasp them, to hold them and examine them.
They came at unexpected moments, catching her off-guard, and
filling her with confusion.
In the beginning, she had asked questions. The Carmelite nuns
were kind and understanding, but theirs was an order of silence,
and the only one permitted to speak was Sister Theresa, the
elderly and frail Mother Superior.
'Do you know who I am?'
'No, my child,' Sister Theresa said.
'How did I get to this place?'
'At the foot of these mountains is a village called
loannina.

You were in a small boat in the lake during a storm last
year.
The boat sank, but by the grace of God, two of our sisters
saw
you and rescued you. They brought you here.'
'But. . . where did I come from before that?'
'I'm sorry, child. I do not know.'

She could not be satisfied with that. 'Hasn't anyone
inquired
about me? Hasn't anyone tried to find me?'

Sister Theresa shook her head. 'No one.'

She wanted to scream with frustration. She tried again.
The
newspapers . . . they must have had a story about my being
missing.'

'As you know, we are permitted no communication with the
outside world. We must accept God's will, child. We must
thank
Him for all His mercies. You are alive.'

And that was as far as she was able to get. In the
beginning,
she had been too ill to be concerned about herself, but
slowly,
as the months went by, she had regained her strength and
her
health.

When she was strong enough to move about, she spent her
days tending the colorful gardens in the grounds of the
convent,
in the incandescent light that bathed Greece in a
celestial glow,
with the soft winds carrying the pungent aroma of lemons
and
vines.

The atmosphere was serene and calm and yet she could find
no peace. I'm lost, she thought, and no one cares. Why?
Have I

done something evil? Who am I? Who am I? Who am /?

The images continued to come, unbidden. One morning she awakened suddenly with a vision of herself in a room with a
naked man undressing her. Was it a dream? Or was it something
that had happened in her past? Who was the man? Was it someone she had married? Did she have a husband? She wore no wedding ring. In fact she had no possessions other than the
black Order of the Carmelite habit that Sister Theresa had given her, and a pin, a small golden bird with ruby eyes and
outstretched wings.

She was anonymous, a stranger living among strangers. There
was no one to help her, no psychiatrist to tell her that her mind
had been so traumatized it could stay sane only by shutting out
the terrible past.

And the images kept coming, faster and faster. It was as though her mind had suddenly turned into a giant jigsaw puzzle,
with odd pieces tumbling into place. But the pieces made no

sense. She had a vision of a huge studio filled with men in army

uniform. They seemed to be making a motion picture. Was I an

. actress? No, she seemed to be in charge. But in charge of what?

A soldier handed her a bouquet of flowers. You'll have to pay
for these yourself',vhe laughed.

Two nights later, she had a dream about the same man. She

was saying goodbye to him at the airport, and she woke up
sobbing because she was losing him.

There was no more peace for her after that. These were not
mere dreams. They were pieces of her life, her past. /
must find
out who I was. Who I am.

And unexpectedly, in the middle of the night, without
warning,
a name was dredged up out of her subconscious. Catherine.
My
name is Catherine Alexander.

Chapter 2

m » »

Athens, Greece

The empire of Constantin Demiris could not be located on
any
map, yet he was the ruler of a fiefdom larger and more
powerful
than many countries. He was one of the two or three
wealthiest
men in the world and his influence was incalculable. He
had no
title or official position but he regularly bought and
sold prime
ministers, cardinals, ambassadors and kings. Demiris'
tentacles
were everywhere, woven through the woof and warp of dozens
of countries. He was a charismatic man, with a brilliantly
incisive
mind, physically striking, well above medium height, with
a
barrel chest and broad shoulders. His complexion was
swarthy
and he had a strong Greek nose and olive-black eyes. He
had
the face of a hawk, a predator. When he chose to take the
trouble, Demiris could be extremely charming. He spoke
eight

languages and was a noted raconteur. He had one of the
most
important art collections in the world, a fleet of private
planes
and a dozen apartments, chateaus and villas scattered
around the
globe. He was a connoisseur of beauty, and he found
beautiful
women irresistible. He had the reputation of being a
powerful
lover, and his romantic escapades were as colorful as his
financial
adventures.
Constantin Demiris prided himself on being a patriot the
blue and white Greek flag was always on display at his villa
in
Kolonaki and on Psara, his private island but
he paid no taxes.
He did not feel obliged to conform to the rules that
applied to
ordinary men. In his veins ran ichor the
blood of the gods.

Nearly every person Demiris met wanted something from
him:
financing for a business project; a donation to a charity;
or simply
the power that his friendship could bestow. Demiris
enjoyed the
challenge of figuring out what it was that people were
really
after, for it was rarely what it appeared to be. His
analytical
«i^t mind was skeptical of surface truth, and as a
consequence he \ believed nothing he was told and trusted no
one. His motto was ^ 'Keep your friends close, but your
enemies closer'. The reporters
who chronicled his life were permitted to see only his
geniality I> and charm, the sophisticated, urbane man of the
world. They
I ? had no reason to suspect that beneath the amiable
fagade,
I1 Demiris was a killer, a gutter fighter whose instinct
was to go for

ý the jugular vein.
He was an unforgiving man who never forgot a slight. To
the
ancient Greeks the word dikaiosini, justice, was often
synonymous
with ekdikisis, vengeance, and Demiris was obsessed with
both. He remembered every affront he had ever suffered,
and
those who were unlucky enough to incur his enmity were
paid
back a hundred fold. They were never aware of it, for
Demiris'
mathematical mind made a game of exacting retribution,
patiently working out elaborate traps and spinning complex
webs
that finally caught and destroyed his enemies.
He enjoyed the hours he spent devising pitfalls for his
adversaries.
He would study his victims carefully, analyzing their
personalities, assessing their strengths and their
weaknesses.
At a dinner party one evening, Demiris had overheard a
motion picture producer refer to him as 'that oily Greek'.
Demiris bided his time. Two years later, the producer
signed
a glamorous internationally known actress to star in his
new
big-budget production in which he put in his own money.
Demiris
waited until the picture was half finished and then
charmed the
leading lady into walking out on it and joining him on his
yacht.
'It will be a honeymoon,' Demiris told her.
She got the honeymoon but not the wedding. The movie
finally
had to shut down and the producer went bankrupt.

There were a few players in Demiris' game with whom he
had not
yet evened the score, but he was in no hurry. He enjoyed
the
anticipation, the planning and the execution. These days
he made

no enemies, for no man could afford to be his enemy, so
his quarry
was limited to those who had crossed his path in the past.
But Constantin Demiris' sense of dikaiosini was
double-edged.
Just as he never forgave an injury, neither did he forget
a favor.
A poor fisherman who had given the young boy shelter found
himself the owner of a fishing fleet. A prostitute who had
fed
and clothed the young man when he was too poor to pay her,
mysteriously inherited an apartment building, without any
idea
of who her benefactor was.

Demiris had started life as the son of a stevedore in
Piraeus. He
had fourteen brothers and sisters and there was never
enough
food on the table.
From the very beginning, Constantin Demiris showed an
uncanny
gift for business. He earned extra money doing odd jobs
after school, and at sixteen, he had saved enough money to
open
a food stand on the docks with an older partner. The
business
flourished and the partner cheated Demiris out of his
half. It
took Demiris ten years to destroy the man. The young boy
was
burning with a fierce ambition. He would lie awake at
night, his
eyes bright in the darkness. I'm going to be rich. I'm
going to be
famous. Some day everyone will know my name. It was the
only
lullaby that could put him to sleep. He had no idea how it
was
going to happen. He knew only that it would.

On Demiris' seventeenth birthday, he came across an
article
about the oil fields in Saudi Arabia, and it was as though

a magic
door to the future had suddenly opened for him.
He went to his father. 'I'm going to Saudi Arabia. I'm
going
to work in the oil fields.'
'Too-sou! What do you know about oil fields?'
'Nothing, father. I'm going to learn.'
One month later, Constantin Demiris was on his way.

It was company policy for the overseas employees of the
Trans-Continental
Oil Corporation to sign a two-year employment
contract, but Demiris felt no qualms about it. He planned
to
stay in Saudi Arabia for as long as it took him to make
his fortune.
He had envisioned a wonderful Arabian nights adventure, a
glamorous, mysterious land with exotic-looking women, and
black gold gushing up out of the ground. The reality was a
shock.
On an early morning in summer, Demiris arrived at Fadili,
a
dreary camp in the middle of the desert, consisting of an
ugly
stone building surrounded by barastis, small brushwood
huts.
There were a thousand lower-bracket workers there, mostly
Saudis. The women who trudged through the dusty, unpaved
streets were heavily veiled.

Demiris entered the building where asked. asked. Mclntyre,
the personnel
manager, had his office.
Mclntyre looked up as the young man came in. 'So. The home
office hired you, eh?'
'Yes, sir.'
'Ever work the oil fields before, son?'
For an instant, Demiris was tempted to lie. 'No, sir.'
Mclntyre grinned. 'You're going to love it here. You're a
million miles from nowhere, bad food, no women that you
can touch without getting your balls chopped off, and not
a
goddamned thing to do at night. But the pay is good,
right?'

'I'm here to learn,' Demiris said earnestly.
'Yeah? Then I'll tell you what you better learn fast. You're in
Moslem country now. That means no alcohol. Anyone caught
stealing gets his right hand cut off. Second time, left hand. The
third time, you lose a foot. If you kill anyone you're beheaded.'
'I'm not planning to kill anyone.'
'Wait,' Mclntyre grunted. 'You just got here.'

The compound was a Tower of Babel, people from a dozen
different countries all speaking their native languages. Demiris
had a good ear and picked up languages quickly. The men were
there to make roads in the middle of an inhospitable desert,
construct housing, install electrical equipment, put in telephone
communications, build workshops, arrange food and water supplies,
design a drainage system, administer medical attention
and, it seemed to young Demiris, to do a hundred other tasks.
They were working in temperatures over one hundred degrees
Fahrenheit, suffering from flies, mosquitoes, dust, fever and
dysentery. Even in the desert there was a social hierarchy. At
the top were the men engaged in locating oil, and below, the
construction workers called 'stiffs', and the clerks known as
'shiny pants'.
Nearly all the men involved in the actual drilling the geologists,
surveyors, engineers and oil chemists were Americans,
for the new rotary drill had been invented in the United States
and the Americans were more familiar with its operation. The
young man went out of his way to make friends with them.

Constantin Demiris spent as much time as he could around
the drillers and he never stopped asking questions. He
stored
away the information, absorbing it the way the hot sands
soaked
up water. He noticed that two different methods of
drilling were
being used.
He approached one of the drillers working near a giant
130oot
derrick. 'I was wondering why there are two different
kinds
of drilling going on.'
The driller explained. 'Well, son, one's cable tool and
one's
rotary. We're going more to rotary now. They start out
exactly
the same.'
They do?'
'Yeah. For either one you have to erect a derrick like
this one
to hoist up the pieces of equipment that have to be
lowered into
the well.' He looked at the eager face of the young man.
till bet
you have no idea why they call it a derrick.'
'No, sir.'
"That was the name of a famous hangman in the seventeenth
century.'
'I see.'
'Cable tool drilling goes way back. Hundreds of years ago,
the
Chinese used to dig water wells that way. They punched a
hole
into the earth by lifting and dropping a heavy cutting
tool hung
from a cable. But today about eighty-five percent of all
wells are
drilled by the rotary method.' He turned to go back to his
drilling.
'Excuse me. How does the rotary method work?'
The man stopped. 'Well, instead of slammin' a hole in the
earth, you just bore one. You see here? In the middle of
the

derrick floor is a steel turntable that's rotated by machinery.
This rotary table grips and turns a pipe that extends downward
through it. There's a bit fastened to the lower end of the pipe.'
'It seems simple, doesn't it?'
'It's more complicated than it looks. You have to have a way
to excavate the loosened material as you drill. You have to
prevent the walls from caving in and you have to seal off the
water and gas from the well.'
'With all that drilling, doesn't the rotary drill ever get dull?'
'Sure. Then we have to pull out the whole damned drill string,
screw a new bit to the bottom of the drill pipe and lower the
pipe back into the hole. Are you planning to be a driller?'
'No, sir. I'm planning to own oil wells.'
'Congratulations. Can I get back to work now?'

One morning, Demiris watched as a tool was lowered into the
well, but instead of boring downward, he noticed that it cut small
circular areas from the sides of the hole and brought up rocks.
'Excuse me. What's the point of doing that?' Demiris asked.
The driller paused to mop his brow. 'This is side wall coring.
We use these rocks for analysis, to see whether they're oil-bearing.'
'I see.'

When things were going smoothly, Demiris would hear drillers
cry out 'I'm turning to the right,' which meant they were making
a hole. Demiris noticed that there were dozens of tiny

holes
drilled all over the field, with diameters as small as two
or three
inches.
'Excuse me. What are those for?' the young man asked.
'Those are prospect wells. They tell us what's underneath.
Saves the company a lot of time and money.'
'I see.'
It was all utterly fascinating to the young man and his
questions
were endless.
'Excuse me. How do you know where to drill?'
'We got a lot of geologists pebble
pups who
take measurements
of the strata and study the cuttings from wells. Then the
rope chokers . . .'
'Excuse me, what's a rope choker?'
'A driller. When they

Constantin Demiris worked from early morning until
sundown,
hauling rigs through the burning desert, cleaning
equipment,
and driving trucks past the streamers of flame rising from
the-rocky
peaks. The flames burned day and night, carrying off the
poisonous gases.
asked. asked. Mclntyre had told Demiris the truth. The
food was bad,
living conditions were horrible, and at night there was
nothing
to do. Worse, Demiris felt as though every pore in his
body were
filled with grains of sand. The desert was alive and there
was no
way to escape it. The sand filtered into the hut and
through his
clothes and into his body until he thought he would go
crazy.
And then it got worse.
The shamal struck. The sandstorms blew every day for a
month, driven by a howling wind with an intensity strong
enough

to drive men mad.
Demiris stared out the door of his barasti at the swirling sand.
'Are we going out to work in that?'
'You're fucking right, Charlie. This ain't a health spa.'
Oil discoveries were being made all around them. There was a new find at Abu Hadriyah and another at Qatif and at Harad,
and the workers were kept busier than ever.

There were two new arrivals, an English geologist and his wife.
Henry Potter was in his late sixties and his wife, Sybil, was in
her early thirties. In any other setting, Sybil Potter would have
been described as a plain-looking, obese woman with a high,
unpleasant voice. In Fadili, she was a raving beauty. Since Henry
Potter was constantly away prospecting for new oil fields, his
wife was left alone a great deal.

Young Demiris was assigned to help her move into their quarters and to assist her in getting settled.

'This is the most miserable place I've ever seen in my life,'
Sybil Potter complained in her whining voice. 'Henry's always
dragging me off to terrible places like this. I don't know why I
put up with it.'

'Your husband is doing a very important job,' Demiris assured
her.

She eyed the attractive young man speculatively. 'My husband
isn't doing all the jobs he should be doing. Do you know what
I mean?'

Demiris knew exactly what she meant. 'No, ma'am.'

'What's your name?'

'Demiris, ma'am. Constantin Demiris.'

'What do your friends call you?'

'Costa.'

'Well, Costa, I think you and I are going to become very good
friends. We certainly have nothing in common with these wogs,
have we?'

'Wogs?'

'You know. These foreign people.'

'I have to go back to work,' Demiris said.

Over the next few weeks, Sybil Potter constantly found excuses
to send for the young man.

'Henry left again this morning,' she told him. 'He's off to do
his silly drilling.' She added archly, 'He should do more drilling
at home.'

Demiris had no answer. The geologist was a very important
man in the company hierarchy and Demiris had no intention of
getting involved with Potter's wife, and jeopardizing his own
job. He was not sure exactly how, but he knew without question

that one way or another this job was going to be his passport
to everything he dreamed of. Oil was the future and he was

determined to be a part of it.

One midnight, Sybil Potter sent for Demiris. He walked
into the
compound where she lived, and knocked at the door.
'Come in.' Sybil was wearing a thin nightgown that
unfortunately
concealed nothing.
'I did
you want to see me, ma'am?'
'Yes, come in, Costa. This bedside lamp doesn't seem to be
working.'
Demiris averted his eyes and walked over to the lamp. He
picked it up to examine it. 'There's no bulb in . . .' And
he felt
her body pressing against his back and her hands groping
him.
'Mrs Potter
Her lips were on his and she was pushing him onto the
bed.-And
he had no control over what happened next.
His clothes were off and he was plunging into her and she
was
screaming with joy. 'That's it! Oh, yes, that's it. My
God, it's
been so long!'
She gave a final gasp and shuddered. 'Oh, darling, I love
you.'
Demiris lay there panicky. What have I done? If Potter
ever
finds out I'm finished.
As though reading his mind, Sybil Potter giggled. 'This
will
be our little secret, won't it, darling?'

Their little secret went on for the next several months.
There
was no way Demiris could avoid her and, since her husband
was
away for days at a time on his explorations, Demiris could
think
of no excuse to keep from going to bed with her. What made
it worse was that Sybil Potter had fallen madly in love
with

him.
'You're much too good to be working in a place like this,
darling,' she told him. 'You and I are going back to
England.'
'My home is Greece.'
'Not anymore.' She stroked his long, lean body. 'You're
going
to come back home with me. I'll divorce Henry and we'll
get
married.'

Demiris felt a sudden sense of panic. 'Sybil, I ... I have
no
money. I . . .'

She ran her tips down his chest. 'That's no problem. I
know
how you can make some money, sweetheart.'

'You do?'

She sat up in bed. 'Last night, Henry told me he's just
discovered some big new oil field. He's very clever at
that,
you know. Anyway, he seemed terribly excited about it. He
wrote out his report before he left and he asked me to
send it
out in the morning pouch. I have it here. Would you like
to see
it?'

Demiris' heart began to beat faster. 'Yes. I... I would.'
He
watched her get out of bed and lumber over to a small
battered
table in the corner. She picked up a large manila envelope
and
returned to the bed with it.

'Open it.'

Demiris hesitated for only an instant. He opened the
envelope
and took out the papers inside. There were five pages. He

scanned through them quickly, then went back to the beginning
and read every word.

'Is that information worth anything?'

Is that information worth anything? It was a report on a new
field that could possibly turn out to be one of the richest oil fields
in history.

Demiris swallowed. 'Yes. It... it could be.'

'Well there you are,' Sybil said happily. 'Now we have money.'

He sighed. 'It's not that simple.'

'Why not?'

Demiris explained. 'This is valuable to someone who can
afford to buy up options on the land around this area. But that
takes money.' He had three hundred dollars in his bank account.

'Oh, don't worry about that. Henry has money. I'll write a
check. Will five thousand dollars be enough?'

Constantin Demiris could not believe what he was hearing.
'Yes. I... I don't know what to say.'

'It's for us, darling. For our future.'

He sat up in bed thinking hard. 'Sybil, do you think you could
hold on to that report for the next day or two?'
'Of course. I'll keep it till Friday. Will that give you enough
time, darling?'
He nodded slowly. 'That will give me enough time.'

With the five thousand dollars that Sybil gave him no, it's not
a gift, it's a loan, he told himself -Constantin Demiris bought
up options on acres of land around the new potential strike.
Some months later, when the gushers began to come in in the
main field, Constantin Demiris was an instant millionaire.
He repaid Sybil Potter the five thousand dollars, sent her a
new nightgown, and returned to Greece. She never saw him again.

Chapter 3

There is a theory that nothing in nature is ever lost that every
sound ever made, every word ever spoken, still exists somewhere
in space and time, and may one day be recalled.
Before radio was invented, they say, who would have believed
that the air around us was filled with the sounds of music and
news and voices from around the world? One day we will be
able to travel back in time and listen to Lincoln's Gettysburg
Address, the voice of Shakespeare, the Sermon on the Mount . . .

Catherine Alexander heard voices from her past, but they were
muffled and fragmented, and they filled her with confusion . . .
'Do you know you're a very special girl, Cathy? I felt it from
the first time I saw you.'
'It's over, I want a divorce. I'm in love with someone else . . .'
'I know how badly I've behaved ... I'd like to make it up to

you . . .'
'He tried to kill me.'
'Who tried to kill you?'
'My husband.'
The voices would not stop. They were a torment. Her past
became a kaleidoscope of shifting images that kept racing
through her mind.
The convent should have been a wonderful, peaceful haven,
but it had suddenly become a prison. I don't belong here.
But
where do I belong? She had no idea.
There were no mirrors in the convent, but there was a
reflecting
pool outside, near the garden. Catherine had carefully
avoided
it, afraid of what it might reveal to her. But on this
morning,
she walked over to it, slowly knelt, and looked down. The
pool
reflected a lovely-looking, suntanned woman with black
hair,
flawless features and solemn, grey eyes that seemed filled
with
pain . . . but perhaps that was merely a trick of the
water. She
saw a generous mouth that looked ready to smile, and a
nose
that was slightly turned up a
beautiful woman in her early
thirties. But a woman with no past and no future. A woman
lost.
/ need someone to help me, Catherine thought desperately,
someone I can talk to. She went into Sister Theresa's office.
'Sister
'Yes, child?'
'I ... think I would like to see a doctor. Someone who can
help me find out who I am.'
Sister Theresa looked at her a long moment. 'Sit down.'
Catherine sat on the hard chair across from the ancient,
scarred
desk.
Sister Theresa said quietly: 'My dear, God is your doctor.
In
due time He will let you know what He wishes you to know.

Besides, no outsiders are ever permitted within these walls.'
Catherine had a sudden flash of memory ... a vague image of a man talking to her in the garden of the convent handing her something . . . but then it was gone.
'I don't belong here.'
'Where do you belong?'
And that was the problem. 'I'm not sure. I'm searching for something. Forgive me, Sister Theresa, but I know it isn't here.'
Sister Theresa was studying her, her face thoughtful. 'I see. If
you left here, where would you go?'
'I don't know.'
'Let me think about this, child. We will talk again soon.'
'Thank you, Sister.'

When Catherine left, Sister Theresa sat at her desk for a long
time, staring at nothing. It was a difficult decision that she had
to make. Finally she reached for a piece of paper and a pen, and
began to write.
'Dear sir,' she began. 'Something has happened that I feel I
should call to your attention. Our mutual friend has informed
me that she wishes to leave the convent. Please advise me what
to do.'

He read the note once, and then sat back in his chair, analyzing
the consequences of the message. So! Catherine Alexander wants
to come back from the dead. Too bad. I'll have to get rid of her.
Carefully. Very carefully.
The first step was to remove her from the convent. Demiris decided it was time to pay Sister Theresa a visit.

The following morning, Demiris had his chauffeur take him to

loannina. Driving through the countryside, Constantin
Demiris
thought about Catherine Alexander. He remembered how
beautiful she had been when he had first met her. She had
Íí been bright and funny and high-spirited, excited about
being in 3f' Greece. She had had everything, Demiris thought.
And then the
gods had taken their vengeance. Catherine had been married
to
one of his pilots, and their marriage had become a living
hell.
Almost overnight, she had aged ten years and become a fat,
blowsy drunk. Demiris sighed. What a waste.

Demiris was seated in Sister Theresa's office.
'I hated to bother you about this,' Sister Theresa
apologized,
'but the child has nowhere to go and . . .'
'You did the right thing,' Constantin Demiris assured her.
'Does she remember anything of her past?'
Sister Theresa shook her head. 'No. The poor dear . . .'
She
walked over to the window where several nuns were working
in
the garden. 'She's out there now.'
Constantin Demiris moved to her side and looked out the
window. There were three nuns, their backs to him. He
waited.
One of them turned, and he could see her face, and his
breath
caught in his throat. She was beautiful. What had happened
to
that fat, ravaged woman?
'She's the one in the middle,' Sister Theresa said.
Demiris nodded. 'Yes.' Sister Theresa's words were truer
than
she knew.
'What do you want me to do with her?'
Careful. 'Let me think about it,' Demiris said. till be in
touch
with you.'

Constantin Demiris had a decision to make. Catherine
Alexander's

appearance had caught him by surprise. She had changed
so completely. No one would know it's the same woman, he
thought. And the idea that came into his head was so
diabolically
simple that he almost laughed aloud.
That evening he dispatched a note to Sister Theresa.

It's a miracle, Catherine thought. A dream come true.
Sister
Theresa had stopped by her tiny cell after matins.
'I have some news for you, child.'
'Yes?'
Sister Theresa chose her words carefully. 'Good news. I
have
written to a friend of the convent about you, and he
wishes to
help you.'
Catherine could feel her heart leap. 'Help me how?'
'That is something he will have to tell you. But he is a
very
kind and generous man. You will be leaving the convent.'
And the words sent a sudden, unexpected chill through
Catherine.
She would be going out into a strange world she could not
even remember. And who was her benefactor?
All Sister Theresa would say was: 'He is a very caring
man.
You should be grateful. His car will be here for you
Monday
morning.'

Catherine was unable to sleep for the next two nights. The
idea
of leaving the convent and going into the world outside
was
suddenly terrifying. She felt naked and lost. Perhaps I'm
better
off not knowing who I am. Please God, keep an eye on me.

On Monday, the limousine arrived outside the convent gate
at
seven o'clock in the morning. Catherine had been awake all
night thinking about the unknown future that lay ahead of
her.

Sister Theresa walked her to the gate that led to the world outside.
'We will pray for you. Remember, if you decide to come back
to us you will always have a place here/
'Thank you, Sister. I'll remember.'
But in her heart, Catherine was sure that she was never going
to return.

The long drive from loannina to Athens filled Catherine with a
series of conflicting emotions. It was tremendously exciting to
be outside the gates of the convent, and yet there was something
ominous about the world beyond. Was she going to learn what
terrible thing had happened in her past? Did it have anything to
do with her recurring dream that someone was trying to drown
her?

ÍS
jit In the early afternoon, the countryside gave way to small villages
5' and finally they reached the outskirts of Athens, and soon were
^ in the middle of the bustling city. It all seemed strange and no unreal to Catherine and
yet oddly familiar. I've been here
I' before, Catherine thought excitedly.
, The driver headed east, and fifteen minutes later they reached
| an enormous estate high on a hill. They drove through a tall iron m gate and a stone gatehouse, up a long driveway lined with
I majestic cypress trees, and stopped before a large white Mediterranean
villa framed by half a dozen tri-agnificent statues.
The chauffeur opened the car door-for
Catherine and she
stepped out. A ma" was waiting at the front door.

'Kalimehra.' The word for goc* **tOf fling sprang to Catherine's
lips unbidden. 'Kalimehra.'
„ 'Are you ... are you the person I've com" to spe9'
t1 'Oh no. Mr Demiris is waiting for you in the library.'
V
'I 23
Demiris. It was a name she had never heard before. Why was
he interested in helping her?

Catherine followed the man through an enormous rotunda,
with a domed roof set in plaques of Wedgwood. The floors were
of creamy Italian marble.

The living room was huge, with a high-beamed ceiling, and
large, low comfortable couches and chairs everywhere. A huge
canvas, a dark and glowering Goya, covered one entire wall. As
they approached the library, the man stopped.

'Mr Demiris is waiting for you inside.'

The walls of the library were white and gold boiserie, and the
shelves lining the walls were filled with leather books embossed
in gold. A man was seated behind a huge desk. He looked
up as Catherine entered, and rose. He searched for a sign of
recognition on her face, but there was none.

'Welcome. 1 am Constantin Demiris. What is your name?' He
made the question sound casual. Did she remember her name?

'Catherine Alexander.'

He showed no reaction. 'Welcome, Catherine Alexander.
Please sit down.' He took a seat opposite her, on a black leather
couch. She was even lovelier close up. She's magnificent, Demiris

thought. Even dressed in that black habit. It's a shame to destroy
anything that beautiful. At least she will die happy.

'It's . . . it's very kind of you to see me,' Catherine said. 'I
don't understand why you . . .'

He smiled, genially. 'It's really quite simple. From time to
time I help out Sister Theresa. The convent has very little money,
and I do what I can. When she wrote me about you and asked
if I could be helpful, I told her that I would be happy to
try.'

'That's very . . .' She stopped, not knowing how to continue.
'Did Sister Theresa tell you that I... that I've lost my
memory?'

'Yes, she did mention something about that.' He paused and
asked off-handedly, 'How much do you remember?'

'I know my name, but I don't know where I came from, or
who I really am.' She added, hopefully, 'Perhaps I can find
someone here in Athens who knows me.'

Constantin Demiris felt a sudden frisson of alarm. That was
the last thing in the world he wanted. 'That's possible of course,'

he said carefully. 'Why don't we discuss it in the morning?
Unfortunately I have to attend a meeting now. I've arranged to
have a suite prepared for you here. I think you'll be comfortable.'
'I ... I really don't know how to thank you.'
He waved a hand. 'That isn't necessary. You will be well taken
care of here. Just make yourself at home.'

"Thank you, Mr . . .'
'My friends call me Costa.'

A housekeeper led Catherine into a fantastic bedroom
suite,
done in soft shades of white, furnished with an oversized
bed with a silk canopy, white couches and armchairs,
antique
tables and lamps and Impressionist paintings on the walls.
Pale
shutters of sea-green kept the'glaring sun at bay. Through
the
windows, Catherine could see the turquoise sea below in
the
distance.
The housekeeper said, 'Mr Demiris has arranged to have
some
clothes sent here for your approval. You are to select
whatever
you like.'
Catherine was conscious, for the first time, that she was
still
wearing the habit given her at the convent.
'Thank you.' She sank down in the soft bed, feeling as
though
she were in a dream. Who was this stranger, and why was he
being so kind to her?

An hour later a van pulled up, filled with clothes. A
couturiere
was ushered into Catherine's bedroom.
'I'm Madame Dimas. Let's see what we have to work with.
Would you get undressed, please?'
'I ... I beg your pardon?'
'Will you get undressed? I can't tell much about your
figure
under those clothes.'
How long had it been since she had been naked in front of
another person?
Catherine began to take off her clothes, moving slowly,
feeling
self-conscious. When she stood nude in front of the woman,
Madame Dimas looked her over with a practiced eye. She
was

impressed.
'You have a fine figure. I think we're going to be able to do
very well for you.'
Two female assistants walked in with boxes of dresses, underwear,
blouses, skirts, shoes.
'Select whatever you like,' the couturiêre said, 'and we'll try
them on.'
'I... I can't afford any of these,' Catherine protested. 'I have
no money.'
The couturiëre laughed. 'I don't think money will be a problem.
Mr Demiris is taking care of it.'
But why?
The fabrics brought back tactile memories of clothes she must
have once worn. There were silks and tweeds and cottons, in an
array of exquisite colors.

The three women were quick and efficient, and two hours later
Catherine had half a dozen beautiful outfits. It was overwhelming.
She sat there, not knowing what to do with herself. I'm
all dressed up, she thought, with noplace to go. But there was some place to go into
the city. The key to whatever had
happened to her was in Athens. She was convinced of it. She stood
up. Come on, stranger. We're going to try to find out who you are.

Catherine wandered out into the front hall, and a butler approached
her. 'May I help you, miss?'
'Yes. I ... I would like to go into the city. Could you call a
taxi for me?'
'I'm sure that won't be necessary, miss. We have limousines

at your disposal. I will arrange a driver for you.'
Catherine hesitated. 'Thank you.' Would Mr Demiris be angry
if she went into the city? He had not said not to.
A few minutes later she was seated in the back of a Daimler
limousine headed for downtown Athens.

Catherine was dazzled by the noisy, bustling city, and the
poignant succession of ruins and monuments that appeared all
around her.
The driver pointed ahead and said proudly, That is the
Parthenon, mission top of the Acropolis.'
Catherine stared up at the familiar white marble building.
'Dedicated to Athena, the goddess of wisdom,' she heard herself
4' saying.
4 The driver smiled approvingly. 'Are you a student of Greek
history, miss?'
Tears of frustration blurred Catherine's vision. 'I don't
know,' on she whispered. 'I don't know.'
* They were passing another ruin. 'That is the theatre of Herodes
Atticus. As you can see, parts of the walls are still standing. It
once seated more than five thousand people.'
'Six thousand, two hundred and fifty-seven,' Catherine said
softly.
Modern hotels and office buildings were everywhere amid the
timeless ruins, an exotic mixture of the past and present. The
limousine passed a large park in the center of the city, with
sparkling, dancing fountains in the middle. Dozens of tables with
green and orange poles lined the park, and the air above them
was carpeted with blue awnings.
I've seen this before, Catherine thought, her hands

growing
cold. And I was happy.

There were outdoor cafes on almost every block, and on the
corners men were selling freshly caught sponges.
Everywhere,
flowers were being sold by vendors, their booths a rage of
violently colored blossoms.
The limousine had reached Syntagma Square.
As they passed a hotel on the corner, Catherine called
out:
'Stop, please!'
The driver pulled over to the curb. Catherine was finding
it
difficult to breathe. / recognize this hotel. I've stayed
here.
When she spoke, her voice was shaky. 'I'd like to get out
here.
I wonder if you could pick me up in in
two hours?'
'Of course, miss.' The chauffeur hurried to open the door
for
her, and Catherine stepped outside into the hot summer
air.'Her
legs were trembling. 'Are you all right, miss?' She had no
answer.
She felt as though she were on the edge of a precipice,
about to
fall into an unknown, terrifying abyss.

She moved through the crowds, marvelling at the hordes of
people hurrying through the streets, creating a roaring
din of
conversation. After the silence and solitude of the
convent,
everything seemed unreal. Catherine found herself moving
toward the Plaka, the old section of Athens in the heart
of the
city, with its twisted alleys and crumbling, worn-down
stairways
that led to tiny houses, coffee shops, and whitewashed,
rambling
structures. She found her way by some instinct she did not
understand nor try to control. She passed a taverna on top

of a
roof, overlooking the city, and stopped, staring. I've sat at that
table. They handed me a menu in Greek. There were three of us.
What would you like to eat? they had asked.
Would you mind ordering for me? I'm afraid I might order the
proprietor.
They had laughed. But who were 'they'?
A waiter approached Catherine. 'Boro na sas voithiso?'
'Ochi efharisto.'
Can I help you? No, thank you. How did I know that? Am I Greek?
Catherine hurriedly moved on, and it was as though someone
were guiding her. She seemed to know exactly where to go.
Everything seemed familiar. And nothing. My God, she
thought. I'm going crazy. I'm hallucinating. She passed a cafe
that said Treflinkas'. A memory was nagging at the corners of
her mind. Something had happened to her here, something
important. She could not remember what.
She walked through the busy, winding streets and turned left
at Voukourestiou. It was filled with smart stores. / used to shop
here. She started to cross the street, and a blue sedan raced
around the corner, barely missing her.

She could recall a voice saying, The Greeks haven't made
the transition to automobiles. In their hearts they're still driving
donkeys. If you want insight into the Greeks, don't read the
guidebooks; read the old Greek tragedies. We're filled with grand
passions, deep joys and great sorrows, and we haven't learned
how to cover them up with a civilized veneer.
Who had said that to her?

A man was hurrying down the street, walking toward her,

staring
at her. He slowed, a look of recognition on his face. He was tall
and dark and Catherine was sure she had never seen him before.
And yet . . .
'Hello.' He seemed very pleased to see her. } 'Hello.'
Catherine took a deep breath. 'Do you know me?'
V He was grinning. 'Of course I know you.'
Catherine felt her heart leap. She was finally going to learn
the truth about the past. But how do you say 'who am F to a
, stranger in a crowded street?
'Could . . . could we talk?' Catherine asked.
'I think we'd better.'
Catherine was on the edge of panic. The mystery of her
identity was about to be solved. And yet she felt a
terrible fear. What if I don't want to know? What if I've done something
dreadful?
The man was leading her toward a small open-air taverna. 'I'm
so glad I ran into you,' he said.
Catherine swallowed. 'So am I.'
A waiter led them to a table.
'What would you like to drink?' the man asked.
She shook her head. 'Nothing.'
There were so many questions to ask. Where do I begin?
'You're very beautiful,' the man said. 'This is fate. Don't you
agree?'
'Yes.' She was almost trembling with excitement. She took a
deep breath. 'I where
did we meet?'
He grinned. 'Is that important, koritsimonl Paris, or Rome,
at the races, at a party.' He reached forward and pressed her
hand. 'You're the prettiest one I've seen around here. How
much do you charge?'
Catherine stared at him, not understanding for a moment,

then shocked, she sprang to her feet.
'Hey! What's the matter? I'll pay you whatever . . .'
Catherine turned and fled, running down the street. She
turned
a corner and slowed down, her eyes filled with tears of
humiliation.
Ahead was a small taverna with a sign in the window that
read, 'Madame Piris Fortune
Teller'. Catherine slowed, then
stopped. / know Madame Piris. I've been here before. Her
heart
began to race. She sensed that here, through the darkened
doorway, was the beginning of the end of the mystery. She
opened the door and stepped inside. It took her several
moments
to get used to the cavernous darkness of the room. There
was a
familiar bar in the corner, and a dozen tables and chairs.
A
waiter walked up to her and addressed her in Greek.
'Kalimehra.'
'Kalimehra. Pou ineh Madame Piris?'
'Madame Piris?'
The waiter gestured toward an empty table in the corner of
the room, and Catherine walked over and sat down.
Everything
was exactly as she remembered it.
An incredibly old woman, dressed in black, with a face
desiccated
into angles and planes, was moving toward the table.
'What can I . . . ?'She stopped, peering into Catherine's
face.
Her eyes opened wide. 'I knew you once but your face . .
.' She
gasped. 'You've come back!'
'You know who I am?' Catherine asked eagerly.
The woman was staring, her eyes filled with horror. 'No!
You're dead! Get out!'
Catherine moaned faintly and felt the hair on her scalp
begin
to rise. 'Please I
just . . .'
'Go, Mrs Douglas!'
'I have to know . . .'

The old woman made the sign of the cross, turned, and fled.
Catherine sat there for a moment, trembling, then rushed out
into the street. The voice in her head followed her. Mrs Douglas!

And it was as though a floodgate opened up. Dozens of brightly lighted scenes suddenly poured into her head, a brilliant
series of kaleidoscopes out of control. I'm Mrs Larry Douglas. She could see her husband's handsome face. She had been madly
in love with hinf, but something had gone wrong. Something . . .
The next image was of herself trying to commit suicide, and
waking up in a hospital.
Catherine stood in the street, afraid her legs would not carry
her, letting the pictures come tumbling into her mind.
She had been drinking a lot, because she had lost Larry. But
then he had come back to her. They were at her apartment, and
Larry was saying, 'I know how badly I've behaved. I'd like to
make it up to you, Cathy. I love you. I've never really loved
anyone else. I want another chance. How would you like to go
away on a second honeymoon? I know a wonderful little place
we can go. It's called loannina.'
And then the horror had begun.
The pictures that came into her mind now were terrifying.
She was on a mountain top with Larry, lost in a swirling grey
mist, and he was moving toward her, his arms outstretched,
ready to push her off the edge. At that moment, some tourists
arrived and saved her.
And then the caves.
'The hotel clerk told me about some caves near here. All

the
honeymooners go there.'
And they had gone to the caves, and Larry had taken her
deep
into the bowels of them, and left her there to die.
She put her hands over her ears as if to shut out the
terrible
thoughts that were rushing at her.
She had been rescued and taken back to the hotel, and a
doctor had given her a sedative. But in the middle of the
night
she had awakened and heard Larry and his mistress in the
kitchen, planning her murder, the wind whipping away their
words.
- no one will ever 1
told you I'd take care of went
wrong. There's nothing they can now,
while she's asleep.
And she remembered running away in that terrible storm
eing
pursued by them getting
into the rowboat, the wind
lashing the boat into the middle of the stormy lake. The
boat
had started to sink, and she had lost consciousness.
Catherine sank onto a street bench, too exhausted to move.
So her nightmares had been real. Her husband and his
mistress
had tried to kill her.
She thought again about the stranger who had come to visit
her at the convent shortly after her rescue. He had handed
her
an exquisitely made golden bird, its wings poised for
flight. 'No
one will harm you now. The wicked people are dead.' She
could
still not see his face clearly.
Catherine's head began to throb.
Finally, she rose and slowly walked toward the street
where
she was to meet the driver who would take her back to
Constantin
Demiris where she would be safe.

Chapter 4

'Why did you let her leave the house?' Constantin Demiris demanded.
'I'm sorry, sir,' the butler replied. 'You didn't say anything
about her not leaving, so . . .'
Demiris forced himself to appear calm. 'It's not important.
She'll probably be back soon.'
'Is there anything else, sir?'
'No.'
Demiris watched the butler go. He walked over to a window
and stared out at the impeccably manicured garden. It was
dangerous for Catherine Alexander to appear in the streets of
Athens, where someone might recognize her. It's too bad I can't
afford to let her live. But first my
vengeance. She'll stay alive 5f until I take my revenge.
I'm going to enjoy myself with her. I'll
si send her away from here, somewhere where no one will know
I her. London will be safe. We can keep an eye on her. I'll give her
a job at my offices there.

#
An hour later, when Catherine returned to the house, Constantin
Demiris could sense instantly the change in her. It was as though
some dark curtain had been lifted and Catherine had suddenly
come alive. She was wearing an attractive white silk suit, with a
white blouse and
Demiris was taken aback by how much her
appearance had changed. Nostimi, he thought. Sexy
'Mr Demiris . . .'
'Costa.'
"I... I know who I am, and and
what happened.'

His face revealed nothing. 'Really? Sit down, my dear, and tell me.'

Catherine was too excited to sit. She began to pace jerkily on
the carpet, back and forth, the words tumbling out of her. 'My
husband and his his
mistress, Noelle, tried to kill me.' She
stopped, looking at him anxiously. 'Does that sound crazy? I
don't know. Maybe it is.'
'Go on, my dear,' he said soothingly.
'Some nuns from the convent saved me. My husband worked
for you, didn't he?' she blurted out.
Demiris hesitated, carefully weighing his answer. 'Yes.' How
much should he tell her? 'He was one of my pilots. I felt a sense
of responsibility toward you. That's only . . .'
She faced him. 'But you knew who I was. Why didn't you tell
me this morning?'
'I was afraid of the shock,' Demiris said smoothly. 'I thought
it better to let you discover things for yourself.'
'Do you know what happened to my husband and that that
woman? Where are they?'
Demiris looked into Catherine's eyes. 'They were executed.'
He watched the blood drain from her face. She made a small
sound. She suddenly felt too weak to stand and sank into a chair.
'I don't
'They were executed by the State, Catherine.'
'But . . . why?'
Careful. Danger. 'Because they tried to murder you.'
Catherine frowned. 'I don't understand. Why would the State
execute them? I'm alive . . .'
He broke in. 'Catherine, Greek laws are very strict. And
justice here is swift. They had a public trial. A number of
witnesses testified that your husband and Noelle Page

attempted
to kill you. They were convicted, and sentenced to death.'
'It's hard to believe.' Catherine sat there, dazed. The trial
Constantin Demiris walked over to her and put his hand on her shoulder. 'You must put the past out of your mind. They
tried to do an evil thing to you, and they paid for it.' He struck
a more buoyant tone. 'I think you and I should discuss the future.
Do you have any plans?'

She did not hear him. Larry, she thought. Larry's handsome
face, laughing. Larry's arms, his voice . . .
'Catherine . . .'
She looked up. Tm sorry?'
'Have you had any thoughts about your future?'
'No, I ... I don't know what I'm going to do. I suppose I
could stay in Athens . . .'
'No,' Demiris said firmly. 'That wouldn't be a good idea. It
would bring back too many unpleasant memories. I would
suggest that you leave Greece.'
'But I have nowhere to go.'
'I've given it some thought,' Demiris told her. 'I have offices
in London. You once worked for a man named William Fraser
in Washington. Do you remember that?'
'William . . . ?' And suddenly she did remember it. That had
been one of the happiest times of her life.
'You were his administrative assistant, I believe.'
'Yes, I . . .'
'You could do the same job for me in London.'
She hesitated. 'I don't know. I don't want to seem ungrateful,
but . . .'
M5*i
V 'I understand. I know everything seems to be happening very
quickly,' Demiris said sympathetically. 'You need some time to

a think about all this. Why don't you have a nice quiet dinner in
your room, and in the morning we'll discuss it further.'
Asking her to have dinner in her room was a last-minute
,{ inspiration. He could not afford to have his wife run into her.
'You're very thoughtful,' Catherine said. 'And very generous.
'no' The clothes are . . .'
*>;, He patted her hand and held it a fraction longer than necessary.
'It's my pleasure.'

She sat in her bedroom watching the blazing sun set over the
blue Aegean in an explosion of color. There is no point in reliving
the past. There is the future to think about. Thank God for
Constantin Demiris. He was her lifeline. Without him, she would
have had no one to turn to. And he had offered her a job in
London. Am I going to take it? Her thoughts were interrupted
by a knock on the door. 'We've brought your dinner, miss.'

Long after Catherine had gone, Constantin Demiris sat in the
library, thinking about their conversation. Noelle. Only once in
his life had Demiris permitted himself to lose control of his
emotions. He had fallen deeply in love with Noelle Page, and
she had become his mistress. He had never known a woman like
her. She was knowledgeable about art, and music, and business,
and she had become indispensable. Nothing about Noelle surprised
him. Everything about Noelle surprised him. He was
obsessed with her. She was the most beautiful, the most sensual

woman Demiris had ever known. She had given up stardom to
be at his side. Noelle had stirred emotions in him that he
had
never felt before. She was his lover, his confidante, his
friend.
Demiris had trusted her completely and she had betrayed
him
with Larry Douglas. It was a mistake Noelle had paid for
with
her life. Constantin Demiris had arranged with the
authorities
for her body to be buried on the grounds of the cemetery
on
Psara, his private island in the Aegean. Everyone had
remarked
on what a beautiful, sentimental gesture it was. In fact,
Demiris
had arranged for the burial plot to be there so that he
could have
the exquisite pleasure of walking over the bitch's grave.
At
Demiris' bedside in his own bedroom was a photograph of
Noelle
at her loveliest, looking up at him and smiling. Forever
smiling,
frozen in time.
Even now, more than a year later, Demiris was unable to
stop
thinking about her. She was an open wound that no doctor
could
ever heal.
Why, Noelle, why? I gave you everything. I loved you, you
bitch. I loved you. 1 love you.
And then there was Larry Douglas. He had paid with his
life.
But that was not enough for Demiris. He had another
vengeance
in mind. A perfect one. He was going to take his pleasure
with
Douglas' wife as Douglas had done with Noelle. Then he
would
send Catherine to join her husband.

'Costa

It was his wife's voice.
Melina walked into the library.

Constantin Demiris was married to Melina Lambrou, an attractive
woman from an old, aristocratic Greek family. She was tall
and regal-looking, with an innate dignity.
"* 'Costa, who is the woman I saw in the hall?' Her voice was
!^ tense.
|(The question caught him off-guard. 'What? Oh. She's a friend
V of a business associate,' Demiris said. 'She's going to
work for 1 me in London.'
£ 'I caught a glimpse of her. She reminds me of someone.'
'Really?'
'Yes.' Melina hesitated. 'She reminds me of the wife of
the I pilot who used to work for you. But that's impossible, of course,
him They murdered her.'
'Yes,' Constantin Demiris agreed. 'They murdered her.'
He watched Melina as she walked away. He would have to be
(careful. Melina was no fool. / never should have married her,
Demiris thought. It was a bad mistake . . .

Ten years earlier, the wedding of Melina Lambrou and Constantin
Demiris had sent shock waves through business and social
circles from Athens to the Riviera to Newport. What had made
it so titillating was that only one month before the wedding the
bride had been engaged to marry another man

As a child, Melina Lambrou had dismayed her family by her
willfulness. When she was ten, she decided she wanted to be a
sailor. The family chauffeur found her at the harbor, trying to
sneak aboard a ship, and brought her home in disgrace. At
twelve, she tried to run away with a travelling circus.
By the time Melina was seventeen, she was resigned to her fate she

was beautiful, fabulously wealthy and the daughter of
Mihalis Lambrou. The newspapers loved to write about her.
She
was a fairy-tale figure whose playmates were princesses
and
princes, and through it all, by some miracle, Melina had
managed
to remain unspoiled. Melina had one brother, Spyros, who
was
ten years older than she, and they adored each other.
Their
parents had died in a boating accident when Melina was
thirteen,
and it was Spyros who had reared her.
Spyros was extremely protective of her too
much so, Melina
thought. As Melina reached her late teens, Spyros became
even
more wary about Melina's suitors, and he carefully
examined
each candidate for his sister's hand. Not one of them
proved to
be good enough.
'You have to be careful,' he constantly counseled Melina.
'You're a target for every fortune hunter in the world.
You're
young and rich and beautiful, and you bear a famous name.'
'Bravo, my dear brother. That will be of immense comfort
to
me, when I'm eighty years old and die an old maid.'
'Don't worry, Melina. The right man will come along.'

His name was Count Vassilis Manos, and he was in his
middle
forties, a successful businessman from an old and
distinguished
Greek family. The Count had fallen instantly in love with
the
beautiful young Melina. His proposal came only a few weeks
after they met.
'He's perfect for you,' Spyros said happily. 'Manos has
his feet
on the ground, and he's crazy about you.'
Melina was less enthusiastic. 'He's not exciting, Spyros.

When
we're together, all he talks about is business, business,
business.
I wish he were more more
romantic.'
Her brother said firmly, 'There's more to marriage than
romance.
You want a husband who is solid and stable, someone
who will devote himself to you.'
And finally Melina was persuaded to accept Count Manos'
proposal.
The Count was thrilled. 'You've made me the happiest man
in the world,' he declared. 'I've just formed a new
company. I'm
going to name it Melina International.'

She would have preferred a dozen roses. The wedding date
was set, one thousand invitations were sent out, and
elaborate
plans were made.

It was then that Constantin Demiris entered Melina
Lambrou's
life.
They met at one of the dozen or so engagement parties that
were being given for the betrothed pair.
The hostess introduced them. This is Melina Lambrou
-Constantin
Demiris/
Demiris stared at her with his brooding black eyes. 'How
long
will they let you stay?' he asked.
'I beg your pardon?'
'Surely you've been sent from the heavens to teach us
mortals
what beauty is.'
,|' Melina laughed. 'You're very flattering, Mr Demiris.'
?,> He shook his head. 'You're beyond flattery. Nothing I
could
'I say would do you justice.'
*f' At that moment Count Manos approached and interrupted
one, the conversation.
That night, just before falling asleep, Melina thought
about a Demiris. She had heard about him, of course. He was

wealthy,
he was a widower, and he had the reputation of being a ruthless
businessman and a compulsive womanizer. I'm glad I'm not
involved with him, Melina thought.
The gods were laughing.

The morning after the party, Melina's butler walked into the
breakfast room. 'A package has arrived for you, Miss Lambrou.
It was delivered by Mr Demiris' chauffeur.'
'Bring it in, please.'
So Constantin Demiris thinks he's going to impress me with his
wealth. Well, he's in for a big disappointment. Whatever he's sent
. . . whether it's an expensive piece of jewelry, or some priceless
antique . . . I'm going to send it right back to him.
The package was small and oblong, and beautifully wrapped.

Curious, Melina opened it. The card read, simply: 'I thought
you might enjoy this. Constantin.'
It was a leather-bound copy of Toda Raba by Nikos
Kazantzakis, her favorite author. How could he have known?
Melina wrote a polite thank-you note, and thought: That's that.
The following morning, another package arrived. This time
it was a recording by Delius, her favorite composer. The note
read: 'You might enjoy listening to this while reading Toda
Raba:
From that day on there were gifts every day. Her favorite
flowers, and perfume, and music, and books. Constantin Demiris
had taken the trouble to find out what Melina's tastes were, and
she could not help but be flattered by his attention.
When Melina telephoned to thank Demiris, he said: 'There's
nothing I could ever give you that would do you justice.'
How many women had he said that to before?

'Will you have lunch with me, Melina?'
She started to say no, and then thought: // can't hurt to have
lunch with the man. He's been very thoughtful.
'Very well.'
When she mentioned to Count Manos that she was having
lunch with Constantin Demiris he objected.
'What's the point, my dear? You have nothing in common
with that terrible man. Why are you going to see him?'
'Vassilis, he's been sending me little gifts every day. I'm going
to tell him to stop.' And even as Melina said it, she
thought: / could have told him that over the telephone.

Constantin Demiris had made reservations at the popular Floca
restaurant on Panepistimiou Street and he was waiting for Melina
when she arrived.
He rose. 'You're here. I was so afraid you might change your
mind.'
'I always keep my word.'
He looked at her and said solemnly: 'And I keep mine. I'm
going to marry you.'

Melina shook her head, half amused, half annoyed. 'Mr
Demiris, I'm engaged to marry someone else.'
'Manos?' He waved a hand in dismissal. 'He's not right for you.'
'Oh, really? And why is that?'
'I've checked on him. Insanity runs in his family, he's a
hemophiliac, he's wanted by the police on a sex charge in
Brussels, and he plays a dreadful game of tennis.'
Melina could not help laughing. 'And you?'
'I don't play tennis.'
'I see. And that's why I should marry you?'
'No. You'll marry me because I'm going to make you the
happiest woman who ever lived.'
'Mr Demiris . . .'
4i He covered her hand with his. 'Costa.'
Jt
j^ She withdrew her hand. 'Mr Demiris, I came here today to

*t tell you that I want you to stop sending me gifts. I don't intend
') to see you again.'
|) He studied her for a long moment. 'I'm sure you are not a
'a cruel person.'
*/ 'I hope not.'
He smiled. 'Good. Then you won't want to break my heart.'
'I doubt if your heart is that easily broken. You have quite a
reputation.'
'Ah, that was before I met you. I've dreamed about you for a long time.'
Melina laughed.
Tm serious. When 1 was a very young man, I used to read about the Lambrou family. You were very rich and I was very
'him poor. I had nothing. We lived from hand to mouth. My father
|r was a stevedore who worked on the docks of Piraeus. I had
'I fourteen brothers and sisters, and we had to fight for everything
we wanted.'
In spite of herself, she was touched. 'But now you are rich.'
'Yes. Not as rich as I am going to be.'
'What made you rich?'
'Hunger. I was always hungry. I'm still hungry.'
She could read the truth in his eyes. 'How did you . . . how
did you get started?'
'Do you really want to know?'
And Melina found herself saying, 'I really want to know.'
'When I was seventeen, I went to work for a small oil company
in the Middle East. I was not doing very well. One night I had dinner with a young geologist who worked for a large oil
company. I ordered a steak that night, and he ordered only soup.
I asked him why he didn't have a steak, and he said it was because he had no back teeth, and he couldn't afford to

buy
dentures. I gave him fifty dollars to buy new teeth. A
month
later he telephoned me in the middle of the night to tell
me he
had just discovered a new oil deposit. He hadn't told his
employer
about it yet. In the morning, I started borrowing every
cent I
could, and by evening I had bought options on all the land
around the new discovery. It turned out to be one of the
biggest
oil deposits in the world.'
Melina was hanging on his every word, fascinated.
'That was the beginning. I needed tankers to ship my oil
in,
so in time I acquired a fleet. Then a refinery. Then an
airline.'
He shrugged. 'It went on from there.'
It was not until long after they were married that Melina
learned that the story about the steak was pure fiction.

Melina Lambrou had had no intention of seeing Constantin
Demiris again. But, by a series of carefully arranged
coincidences,
Demiris invariably managed to appear at the same party,
or theater, or charity event that Melina was attending.
And each
time, she felt his overpowering magnetism. Beside him,
Vassilis
Manos seemed she
hated to admit it, even to herself-boring.
Melina Lambrou was fond of the Flemish painters, and when
Bruegel's Hunters in the Snow came on the market, before
she
could purchase it, Constantin Demiris sent it to her as a
gift.
Melina was fascinated by his uncanny knowledge of her
tastes.
'I can't accept such an expensive gift from you,' she
protested.
'Ah, but it's not a gift. You must pay for it. Dinner with
me
tonight.'

And she had finally agreed. The man was irresistible.
A week later Melina broke off her engagement to Count Manos.

When Melina told her brother the news he was stunned.
'Why, in heaven's name?' Spyros asked. 'Why?' 'Because I'm going to marry Constantin Demiris.'
He was aghast. 'You must be crazy. You can't marry Demiris.
He's a monster. He'll destroy you. If . . .'
'You're wrong about him, Spyros. He's wonderful. And we're in love. It's . . .'
'You're in love,' he snapped. 'I don't know what he's after,
but it has nothing to do with love. Do you know what his reputation is with women? He . . .'
'That's all in the past, Spyros. I'm going to be his wife.'
And there was nothing he could do to talk his sister out of the
wedding.
A month later Melina Lambrou and Constantin Demiris were married.

In the beginning it seemed to be a perfect marriage. Constantin
was amusing and attentive. He was an exciting and passionate
lover, and he constantly surprised Melina with lavish gifts and
trips to exotic places.
On the first night of their honeymoon, he said, 'My first wife
was never able to give me a child. Now we'll have many sons.'
'No daughters?' Melina teased.
'If you wish. But a son first.'
The day Melina learned she was pregnant, Constantin was ecstatic.
'He will take over my empire,' he declared happily.
In her third month, Melina miscarried. Constantin Demiris was out of the country when it happened. When he returned and

heard the news he reacted like a madman.
'What did you do?' he screamed. 'How could it happen?'
'Costa, I . . .'

'You were careless!'
'No, I swear . . .'
He took a deep breath. 'All right. What's done is done. We'll
have another son.'
'I ... I can't.' She could not meet his eyes.
'What are you saying?'
'They had to perform an operation. I can't have another child.'
He stood there, frozen, then turned and stalked out without
a word.
From that moment on, Melina's life became a hell. Constantin
Demiris carried on as though his wife had deliberately killed his
son. He ignored her, and began seeing other women.
Melina could have borne that, but what made the humiliation
so painful was the pleasure he took in publicly flaunting
his liaisons. He openly had affairs with movie stars, opera
singers, and the wives of some of his friends. He took his lovers
to Psara and on cruises on his yacht, and to public functions.
The press gleefully chronicled Constantin Demiris' romantic
adventures.

They were at a dinner party at the house of a prominent banker.
'You and Melina must come,' the banker had said. 'I have a
new Oriental chef who makes the best Chinese food in the
world.'
The guest list was prestigious. At the dinner table was a
fascinating collection of artists, politicians and industrialists. The
food was indeed wonderful. The chef had prepared shark-fin
soup, shrimp rolls, mu shu pork, Peking duck, spareribs,

Canton
noodles and a dozen other dishes.
Melina was seated near the host, at one end of the table,
her
husband next to the hostess at the other end. To Demiris'
right
was a pretty young film star. Demiris was concentrating on
her,
ignoring everyone else at the table. Melina could hear
snatches
of his conversation.
'When you finish your picture, you must come on my yacht.
It will be a lovely vacation for you. We'll cruise along
the
Dalmatian coast . . .'

I
Melina tried not to listen, but it was impossible. Demiris
made
no effort to keep his voice down. 'You've never been to
Psara,
have you? It's a lovely little island, completely
isolated. You'll
enjoy it.' Melina wanted to crawl under the table. But the
worst
was yet to comet
They had just finished the sparerib course, and the
butlers
were bringing silver finger bowls.
As a finger bowl was placed in front of the young star,
Demiris
said, 'You won't need that.' And, grinning, he lifted her
hands
in his and began slowly licking the sauce from her
fingers, one
by one. The other guests averted their eyes.
Melina rose to her feet and turned to her host. 'If you'll
excuse
me, I -1 have a headache.'
The guests watched as she fled from the room. Demiris did
not come home that night, or the next.

When Spyros heard about the incident, he was livid. 'Just give
me the word,' Melina's brother fumed, 'and I'll kill the son-ofa-bitch.'
'He can't help it,' Melina defended him. 'It's his nature.'
'His nature? He's an animal! He should be put away. Why don't you divorce him?'
It was a question Melina Demiris had asked herself often in
the still of the long, lonely nights she spent by herself. And it
always came down to the same answer. / love him.

At five thirty in the morning, Catherine was awakened by an I apologetic maid.
>r 'Good morning, miss . . .'
Catherine opened her eyes and looked around in confusion.
Instead of her tiny cell at the convent, she was in a beautiful
bedroom in ... Her memory came flooding back. The trip into
Athens . . . You're Catherine Douglas . . . They were executed
by the State . . .
'Miss . . .'
'Yes?'
'Mr Demiris asked if you would join him for breakfast on the
terrace.'
Catherine stared up at her sleepily. She had been awake until
four o'clock, her mind in a turmoil.
Thank you. Tell Mr Demiris I'll be right there.'

Twenty minutes later a butler escorted Catherine to an enormous
terrace facing the sea. There was a low stone wall that overlooked
the gardens twenty feet below. Constantin Demiris was seated
at a table, waiting. He studied Catherine as she walked toward
him. There was an exciting innocence about her. He was

going
to take it, possess it, make it his. He imagined her naked in
his bed, helping him punish Noelle and Larry again. Demiris
rose.
'Good morning. Forgive me for awakening you so early, but
I must leave for my office in a few minutes, and I wanted the
opportunity for us to have a little chat first.'
'Yes, of course,' Catherine said.
She sat down at the large marble table opposite him, facing
the sea. The sun was just rising, showering the sea with a
thousand sparkles.
'What would you like for breakfast?'
She shook her head. 'I'm not hungry.'
'Some coffee perhaps?'
'Thank you.'
The butler was pouring hot coffee into a Belleek cup.
'Well, Catherine,' Demiris began. 'Have you thought about
our conversation?'
Catherine had thought of nothing else all night. There was
nothing left for her in Athens, and she had nowhere else
to go.
/ won't go back to the convent, she vowed. The invitation to
work for Constantin Demiris in London sounded intriguing. In
fact, Catherine admitted to herself, it sounds exciting. It could
be the beginning of a new life.
'Yes,' Catherine said, 'I have.'
'And?'
'I I
think I would like to try it.'
Constantin Demiris managed to conceal his relief. 'I'm delighted.
Have you ever been to London?'
'No. That is I
don't think so.' Why don't I know for sure? There were
still so many frightening gaps in her memory. How
many more surprises am I going to get?
'It's one of the few civilized cities left in the world.

I'm sure
you'll enjoy it very much.'
Catherine hesitated. 'Mr Demiris, why are you going to all this trouble for me?'
'Let's just say it's because I feel a sense of responsibility.' He
paused. 'I introduced your husband to Noelle Page.'
'Ah,' Catherine said slowly. Noelle Page. The name sent a small shiver through her. The two of them had died for each
other. Larry must have loved her so much.
Catherine forced herself to ask a question that had been tormenting her all night long. 'How . . . how were they executed?'
There was a small pause. 'They were shot by a firing squad.'
'Oh.' She could feel the bullets tearing into Larry's flesh,
ripping apart the body of the man she had once loved so much.
She was sorry she had asked.
'Let me give you some advice. Don't think about the past. It
can only be hurtful. You must put all that behind you.'
Catherine said slowly, 'You're right. I'll try.'
'Good. I happen to have a plane flying to London this morning,
Catherine. Can you be ready to leave in a little while?'
Catherine thought of all the trips she had taken with Larry,
the excited preparations, the packing, the anticipation.
This time, there would be no one to go with, little to pack,
and nothing to prepare for. 'Yes. I can be ready.'
'Excellent. By the way,' Demiris said casually, 'now that your
memory has returned, perhaps there's someone you'd like to get
in touch with, someone from your past whom you would like to
let know that you're all right.'
The name that instantly sprang to her mind was William Fraser. He was the only one in the world who remained from her past. But she knew she was not ready to face him yet.

When

I get settled, Catherine thought. When I start working again, I'll
get in touch with him.
Constantin Demiris was watching her, waiting for her answer.
'No,' Catherine said finally. 'There's no one.'
She had no idea that she had just saved William Eraser's life.
'I'll arrange a passport for you.' He handed her an envelope.
'This is an advance on your salary. You won't have to worry
about a place to live. The company has a flat in London. You'll
stay there.'
It was overwhelming. 'You're much too generous.'
He took her hand in his. 'You'll find that I'm . . .'He changed
what he was going to say. Handle her carefully, he thought. Slowly. You don't want to scare her away. '. . . that I can be a
very good friend.'
'You are a very good friend.'
Demiris smiled. Wait.

Two hours later, Constantin Demiris helped Catherine into the
back seat of the Rolls-Royce that was to take her to the airport.
'Enjoy London,' he said. till be in touch with you.'
Five minutes after the car had departed, Demiris was on the
telephone to London. 'She's on her way.'

Chapter 5

The plane was scheduled to leave from Hellenikon Airport at
9.00 and. It was a Hawker Siddeley, and to Catherine's surprise,
she was the only passenger. The pilot, a pleasant-faced, middle-aged

Greek named Pantelis, saw to it that Catherine was
comfortably
seated and buckled in.
'We'll be taking off in just a few minutes,' he informed
her.
'Thank you.'
Catherine watched him walk into the cockpit to join the
co-pilot, and her heart suddenly began to beat faster.
This is
the plane that Larry flew. Had Noelle Page sat in the seat
I am
now sitting in? Catherine suddenly felt as though she were
going
to faint; the walls began to close in on her. She shut her
eyes
and took a deep breath. That's all over, she thought.
Demiris is
right. That's the past and nothing can change it.
She heard the roar of the engines, and opened her eyes.
The
plane was lifting off, heading northwest toward London.
How
many times had Larry made this flight? Larry. She was
shaken
by the mixture of emotions that his name brought. And the
memories. The wonderful, terrible memories . . .

It was the summer of 1940, the year before America got
into the
war. She had been fresh out of Northwestern University,
and
had gone from Chicago to Washington, DC, for her first
job.
Her roommate had said: 'Hey, I heard about a job opening
that might interest you. One of the girls at the party
said she's
quitting to go back to Texas. She works for Bill Fraser.
He's in
charge of public relations for the State Department. I
just heard
about it last night, so if you get over there now, you
should beat
all the other girls to it.'
Catherine had raced over, only to find Eraser's reception

office
already packed with dozens of applicants for the job. /
haven't

a chance, Catherine thought. The door to the inner office
opened
and William Fraser emerged. He was a tall, attractive man,
with
curly, blond hair, greying at the temples, bright blue
eyes, and
a strong, rather forbidding jawline.
He said to the receptionist, 'I need a copy of Life. The
issue
that came out three or four weeks ago. It has a picture of
Stalin
on the cover.'
till order it, Mr Fraser,' the receptionist said.
'Sally, I have Senator Borah on the line. I want to read
him a
paragraph from that issue. You have two minutes to find a
copy
for me.' He went into his office and closed the door.
The applicants looked at one another and shrugged.
Catherine stood there, thinking hard. She turned and
pushed
her way out of the office. She heard one of the women say,
'Good. That's one down.'
Three minutes later, Catherine returned to the office with
the
old copy of Life with a picture of Stalin on the cover.
She handed
it to the receptionist. Five minutes later Catherine found
herself
seated in William Fraser's office.
'Sally tells me that you came up with the Life magazine.'
'Yes, sir.'
'I assume you didn't just happen to have a three-week-old
issue in your purse.'
'No, sir.'
'How did you find it so quickly?'
'I went down to the barber shop. Barber shops and
dentists'
offices always have old issues lying around.'
'Are you that bright about everything?'

'No, sir.'
'We'll find out,' William Fraser said. She was hired.

Catherine enjoyed the excitement of working for Fraser. He was
a bachelor, wealthy and social, and he seemed to know everyone
in Washington. Time magazine had called him: 'The most eligible
bachelor of the year'.
Six months after Catherine started to work for William Fraser,
they fell in love.
In his bedroom, Catherine said, 'I have to tell you something.
I'm a virgin.'
Fraser shook his head in wonder. 'That's incredible. How did
I wind up with the only virgin in the city of Washington?'

One day William Fraser said to Catherine, 'They've asked our
office to supervise an Army Air Corps recruiting film they're
shooting at MGM studios in Hollywood. I'd like you to handle
the picture while I'm in London.'
The? Bill, I can't even load a Brownie. What do I know about
making a training film?'
Fraser grinned. 'About as much as anyone else. You don't have
to worry. They have a director. His name is Allan Benjamin. The
Army plans to use actors in the film.'
'Why?'
'I guess they feel that soldiers won't be convincing enough to
play soldiers.'
That sounds like the Army.'
And Catherine had flown to Hollywood to supervise the training
film.

The soundstage was filled with extras, most of them in
ill-fitting
army uniforms.
'Excuse me,' Catherine said to a man passing by. 'Is Mr
Allan
Benjamin here?'
'The little corporal?' He pointed. 'Over there.'
Catherine turned and saw a slight, frail-looking man in a
uniform with corporal's stripes. He was screaming at a man
wearing a general's stars.
'Fuck what the casting director said. I'm up to my ass in
generals. I need non-coms.' He raised his hands in
despair.
'Everybody wants to be a chief, nobody wants to be an
Indian.'
'Excuse me,' Catherine said. 'I'm Catherine Alexander.'
Thank God!' the little man said. 'You take over. I don't
know
what I'm doing here. I had a
thirty-fivehundreddollara-year
job in Dearborn editing a furniture trade magazine, and I
was
drafted into the Signal Corps and sent to write training
films.
What do I know about producing or directing? This is all
yours.'
He turned and hurried toward the exit, leaving Catherine
standing
there.
A lean, grey-haired man in a sweater moved toward her, an
amused smile on his face. 'Need any help?'
'I need a miracle,' Catherine said. 'I'm in charge of
this, and
I don't know what I'm supposed to be doing.'
He grinned at her. 'Welcome to Hollywood. I'm Tom O'Brien,
the assistant director.'
'Do you think you could direct this?'
She saw the corner of his lips twist. 'I could try. I've
done six
pictures with Willie Wyler. The situation isn't as bad as
it looks.
All it needs is a little organization. The script's
written, and the
set's ready.'

Catherine looked around the soundstage. 'Some of these uniforms
look terrible. Let's see if we can't do better.'
O'Brien nodded approvingly. 'Right.'
Catherine and O'Brien walked over to the group of extras.
The din of conversation on the enormous stage was deafening.
'Let's hold it down, boys,' O'Brien yelled. "This is Miss Alexander.
She's going to be in charge here.'
Catherine said, 'Let's line up, so we can take a good look at
you, please.'
O'Brien formed the men into a ragged line. Catherine heard
laughter and voices nearby and turned in annoyance. One of the
men in uniform stood in a corner, paying no attention, talking
to some girls who were hanging on his every word and giggling.
The man's manner irritated Catherine.
'Excuse me. Would you mind joining the rest of us?'
He turned and asked, lazily: 'Are you talking to me?'
'Yes. We'd like to go to work.'
He was extraordinarily handsome, tall and wiry, with blue-black
hair and stormy dark eyes. His uniform fitted perfectly.
On his shoulders were the bars of a captain, and across his breast
he had pinned on a splash of brightly colored ribbons. Catherine
stared at them. 'Those medals . . .'
'Are they impressive enough, boss?' His voice was deep and
filled with insolent amusement.
'Take them off.'
'Why? I thought I'd give this film a little color.'
'There's one little thing you forgot. America's not at war yet.
You'd have had to have won those at a carnival.'
'You're right,' he admitted sheepishly. "I didn't think of that.
I'll take some of them off.'
'Take them all off,' Catherine snapped.

After the morning's shooting, while Catherine was having lunch
at the commissary, he walked up to her table. 'I wanted to ask
you how I did this morning. Was I convincing?'
His manner infuriated her. 'You enjoy wearing that uniform
and strutting around the girls, but have you thought about
enlisting?'
He looked shocked. 'And get shot at? That's for suckers.'
Catherine was ready to explode. 'I think you're contemptible.'
'Why?'
'If you don't know why, I could never explain it to you.'
'Why don't you try? At dinner tonight. Your place. Do you cook?'
'Don't bother coming back to the set,' Catherine snapped. till
tell Mr O'Brien to send you your check for this morning's work.
What's your name?'
'Douglas. Larry Douglas.'

The experience with the arrogant young actor rankled Catherine,
and she was determined to put it out of her mind. For some
reason, she found it difficult to forget him.

When Catherine returned to Washington, William Fraser said,
'I missed you. I've been doing a lot of thinking about you. Do
you love me?'

'Very much, Bill.'
'I love you too. Why don't we go out tonight and celebrate?'
Catherine knew that that was the night he was going to propose.

They went to the exclusive Jefferson Club. In the middle of
dinner, Larry Douglas walked in, still wearing his Army Air

Corps uniform with all the medals. Catherine watched unbelievingly
as he walked over to their table and greeted not her, but Fraser.
Bill Fraser rose: 'Cathy, this is Captain Lawrence Douglas.
Larry, this is Miss Alexander Catherine.
Larry's been flying
with the RAF. He was the leader of the American squadron
over there. They talked him into heading up a fighter base in
Virginia to get some of our boys ready for combat.'
Like the re-run of an old movie, Catherine remembered how
she had ordered him to take off his bars and his medals, and
how he had cheerfully obliged. She had been smug, overbearing
and
she had called him a coward! She wanted to crawl under the table.

The next day, Larry Douglas telephoned Catherine at her office.
She refused to take his calls. When she finished work he was
outside, waiting for her. He had taken off his medals and ribbons
and was wearing the bars of a second lieutenant.
He smiled and walked up to her. 'Is this better?'
Catherine stared at him. 'Isn't . . . isn't wearing the wrong
insignia against regulations?'
'I don't know. I thought you were in charge of all that.'
She looked into his eyes and knew that she was lost. There
was a magnetic force about him that was irresistible.
'What do you want from me?'
'Everything. I want you.'
They had gone to his apartment and made love. And it was
an exquisite joy that Catherine had never dreamed possible, a
fantastic coming together that rocked the room and the universe
until
there was an explosion that became a delirious ecstasy,

an unbelievable shattering journey, an arriving and a
departing,
an ending and a beginning. And she had lain there, spent
and
numb, holding him tightly, never wanting to let him go,
never
wanting this feeling to stop.
They were married five hours later, in Maryland.

Now, seated in the plane, on her way to London to begin a
new
life, Catherine thought: We were so happy. Where did it
all go
wrong? The romantic movies and the love songs tricked us
all
into believing in happy endings and knights in shining
armor and
love that never, never died. We really believed that James
Stewart
and Donna Reed had A Wonderful Life and we knew that Clark
Gable and Claudette Colbert Would be together forever
after It
Happened One Night, and we shed tears when Fredric March
returned to Myrna Loy for The Best Years of Our Lives, and
we
were sure that Joan Fontaine found happiness in the arms
of
Laurence Olivier in Rebecca. And they were lies. All lies.
And
the songs. I'll Be Loving You, Always. How do men figure
always? With an egg timer? How Deep Is The Ocean? What did
Irving Berlin have in mind? One foot? Two feet? And. . .
Forever
and a Day. I'm leaving. I want a divorce. Some Enchanted
Evening. Come on. We're going to climb Mount Tzoumerka . .
. You and the Night and the Music. The hotel manager told me
about some caves near here ... I Love You For Sentimental
Reasons. No one will ever . . . now while she's asleep. Be
My
Love. And we listened to the songs, and we watched the
movies
and really thought that was what life was going to be
like. I
believed in my husband so much. Can I ever believe in

anyone
again? What did I do to make him want to murder me?
'Miss Alexander . . .'
Catherine looked up, startled, unfocused.
The pilot was standing over her. 'We've landed. Welcome to London.'

There was a limousine waiting for Catherine at the airport. The

chauffeur said, 'I'll arrange for your luggage, Miss Alexander.
My name is Alfred. Would you like to go directly to your flat?'
My flat. 'Yes, that will be fine.'
Catherine sank back in her seat. Unbelievable. Constantin Demiris had arranged a private plane for her, and a place to
live. He was either the most generous man in the world, or ...
She simply could not think of any alternative. No. He's the most
generous man in the world. I'll have to find a suitable way to show
my appreciation.

The flat, on Elizabeth Street off Eaton Square, was utterly
luxurious. It consisted of a large entrance hall, a beautifully
furnished drawing room, with a crystal chandelier, a panelled
library, a kitchen stocked with food, three attractively furnished
bedrooms, and servants quarters.
Catherine was greeted at the door by a woman in her forties,
wearing a black dress. 'Good afternoon, Miss Alexander. I am
Anna. I am your housekeeper.'
Of course. My housekeeper. Catherine was beginning to take it all in stride. 'How do you do?'
The chauffeur brought Catherine's suitcases in and placed them in her bedroom. 'The limousine is at your disposal,'

he
told her. 'Just tell Anna when you're ready to go to the office,
and I will pick you up.'
The limousine is at my disposal. Naturally. "Thank you.'
Anna said, till unpack your bags. If there's anything else you
need, just let me know.'
'I can't think of a thing,' Catherine said honestly.

Catherine wandered around the flat until Anna had finished
unpacking. She went into the bedroom and looked at the beautiful
new dresses that Demiris had bought her, and thought: All
this is like a wonderful dream. There was a feeling of total
unreality about it. Forty-eight hours ago, she had been watering
rose bushes at the convent. Now she was living the life of a
duchess. She wondered what the job would be like. I'll work
hard. I don't want to let him down. He's been so wonderful. She
felt suddenly tired. She lay down on the soft, comfortable
bed. I'll just rest a minute, she thought. She closed her eyes.
She was drowning, and screaming for help. And Larry was
swimming toward her, and when he reached her he pushed her
under water. And she was in a dark cave, and bats were coming
at her, tearing at her hair, beating their clammy wings against
her face. Catherine awakened with a shuddering start and sat up
in bed, trembling.
She took deep breaths to steady herself. That's enough, she
thought. It's over. That was yesterday. This is today. No one's
going to hurt you. No one. Not any more.
Outside Catherine's bedroom, Anna, the housekeeper, had
been listening to the screams. She waited a moment, and when

there was silence she walked down the hall and picked up the
telephone to report to Constantin Demiris.

The Hellenic Trade Corporation was located at 217 Bond Street,
off Piccadilly, in an old government building that had been
converted years earlier to offices. The exterior of the building
was a masterpiece of architecture, elegant and graceful.
When Catherine arrived, the office staff was waiting for her.
There were half a dozen people near the door to greet her.
'Welcome, Miss Alexander. I'm Evelyn Kaye. This is Carl
. . . Tucker . . . Matthew . . . Jennie . . .'
The names and faces became a blur.
'How do you do?'
'Your office is ready for you. I'll show you the way.'
"Thank you.'
The reception room was tastefully furnished, with a large
chesterfield sofa, flanked by two Chippendale chairs and a
tapestry.
They walked down a long carpeted corridor and passed a
conference room with heavy pine panelling, and leather chairs
along a highly polished table.
Catherine was ushered into an attractive office, with worn,
comfortable furniture and a leather couch.
'It's all yours.'

'It's lovely,' she murmured.

There were fresh flowers on the desk.

'From Mr Demiris.'

He's so thoughtful.

Evelyn Kaye, the woman who had shown her into the office,
was a stocky, middle-aged woman with a pleasant face and a
comfortable manner. 'It will take you a few days to get used to

the place, but the operation is really quite simple. We're
one
of the nerve centers of the Demiris empire. We coordinate
the reports from the overseas divisions, and send them on
to
headquarters in Athens. I'm the office manager. You'll be
my
assistant.'

'Oh.' So I'm the assistant to the office manager.
Catherine had
no idea what was expected of her. She had been thrown into
a
fantasy world. Private planes, limousines, a beautiful
flat with
servants . . .

'Wim Vandeen is our resident mathematical genius. He
computes
all the statements and puts them into a master financial
analysis chart. His mind works faster than most
calculating
machines. Come along to his office and meet him.'

They walked down the corridor to an office at the end of
the
hall. Evelyn opened the door without knocking.

'Wim, this is my new assistant.'

Catherine stepped into the office and stood there,
riveted.
Wim Vandeen appeared to be in his early thirties, a thin
man
with a slack-jawed mouth, and a dull, vacant expression.
He was
staring out the window.

'Wim. Wim! This is Catherine Alexander.'

He turned around. 'Catherine the First's real name was
Marta
Skowronka she was a servant girl born in 1684 who was
captured

by the Russians she married Peter the First and was empress of
Russia from 1725 to 1727, Catherine the Great was the daughter
of a German prince she was born in 1729 and she married Peter,
who became Emperor Peter the Third in 1762, and she succeeded
to his throne that same year after she had him murdered. Under
her reign there were three divisions of Poland and two wars
against Turkey . . .'The information poured out like a fountain,
in a monotone.

Catherine was listening, stunned. 'That's . . . that's very interesting,'
she managed.
Wim Vandeen looked away.
Evelyn said, 'Wim is shy when he meets people.'
Shy? Catherine*thought. The man is weird. And he's a genius?
What kind of job is this going to be?

In Athens, in his offices on Aghiou Geronda Street, Constantin
Demiris was listening to a telephone report from Alfred in London.
'I drove Miss Alexander directly from the airport to the flat,
Mr Demiris. I asked her if she wished me to take her anywhere
else, as you suggested, and she said no.'
'She's had no outside contacts at all?'
'No, sir. Not unless she made some telephone calls from the
flat, sir.'
Constantin Demiris was not worried about that. Anna, the
housekeeper, would report to him. He replaced the receiver,
satisfied. She presented no immediate danger to him and he
would see that she was watched. She was alone in the world.

She had no one to turn to except her benefactor,
Constantin
Demiris. / must make arrangements to go to London soon,
Demiris thought happily. Very soon.

Catherine Alexander found her new job interesting. Daily
reports
came in from Constantin Demiris' far-flung empire. There
were bills of lading from a steel mill in Indiana, audits
from an
automobile factory in Italy, invoices from a newspaper
chain in
Australia, a gold mine, an insurance company. Catherine
collated
the reports and saw to it that the information went
directly
to Wim Vandeen. Win glanced at the reports once, put them
through the incredible computer that was his brain, and
almost
instantly calculated the percentages of profit or loss to
the
company.
Catherine enjoyed getting to know her new colleagues and
she was awed by the beauty of the old building she worked
in.

She mentioned it to Evelyn Kaye once in front of Wim and
Wim said, 'This was a government custom house designed by
Sir
Christopher Wren in seventeen twenty-one. After the great
fire
of London, Christopher Wren redesigned fifty churches
including
St Paul's, St Michael's, and St Bride's He designed the
Royal
Exchange and Buckingham House He died in seventeen
twenty-three
and is buried in St Paul's This house was converted to an
office building in nineteen seven, and in the Second World
War
during the Blitz, the government declared it an official
air-raid
shelter.'
The air-raid shelter was a large, bomb-proof room located

through a heavy iron door adjoining the basement.
Catherine
looked into the heavily fortified room, and thought about
the
brave British men and women and children who had found
shelter here during the terrible bombing by Hitler's
Luftwaffe.
The basement itself was huge, running the entire length of
the
building. It had a large boiler for heating the building,
and was
filled with electronic and telephone equipment. The boiler
was
a problem. Several times, Catherine had escorted a
repairman
down to the basement to take a look at it. Each one would
tinker with it, pronounce it cured of whatever had ailed
it, and
leave.
'It looks so dangerous,' Catherine said. 'Is there any
chance
that it might explode?'
'Bless your heart, miss, of course not. See this safety
valve
here? Well, if the boiler should ever get too hot, the
safety valve
releases all the excess steam, and Bob's your uncle. No
problem.'

After the work day was over, there was London. London ...
a
cornucopia of wonderful theatre, ballet and music
concerts.
There were interesting old bookstores like Hatchards, and
Foyles
and
dozens of museums, and little antique shops, and
restaurants.
Catherine visited the lithograph shops in Cecil Court
and shopped at Harrods, Fortnum & Mason, and Marks &
Spencer and had Sunday tea at the Savoy.
From time to time, unbidden thoughts came into Catherine's
mind. There were so many things to remind her of Larry. A
voice ... a phrase ... a cologne ... a song. No. The past

is
finished. The future is what's important. And each day she became
stronger.

Catherine and Evelyn Kaye became friends and occasionally went out together. One Sunday they visited the open-air art
exhibition on the Thames embankment. There were dozens of artists there, young and old, displaying their paintings, and they
all had one thing in common: they were failures who had been
unable to have their works exhibited in any gallery. The paintings
were terrible. Catherine bought one out of sympathy.
'Where are you going to put it?' Evelyn asked.
'In the boiler room,' Catherine said.

As they walked along the London streets, they came across the
pavement artists, men who used colored chalks to paint on
the stone of the pavement. Some of their work was amazing.
Passersby would stop to admire them and then toss a few coins
to the artists. One afternoon on her way back from lunch,
Catherine stopped to watch an elderly man working on a beautiful
landscape in chalk. As he was finishing it, it began to rain
and the old man stood there watching his work being washed
away. That's a lot like my past life, Catherine thought.

Evelyn took Catherine to Shepherd Market. 'This is an interesting
area,' Evelyn promised.
It was certainly colorful. There was a three-hundredyear-old
restaurant called Tiddy Dols, a magazine stand, a market, a
beauty parlor, a bakery, antique shops and several two-and
three-story residences.
The name plates on the mailboxes were odd. One read 'Helen'

and below it 'French lessons'. Another read 'Rosie' and, below
that, 'Greek taught here'.
'Is this an educational area?' Catherine asked.
Evelyn laughed aloud. 'In a way I guess it is. Only the kind of education these girls give can't be taught in school.'
Evelyn laughed even louder when Catherine blushed.

Catherine was alone most of the time, but she kept herself too
busy to be lonely. She plunged into her days as though trying to
make up for the precious moments of her life that had been stolen from her. She refused to worry about the past or the
future. She visited Windsor Castle, and Canterbury with its
beautiful cathedral, and Hampton Court. On weekends, she went into the country and stayed at quaint little inns and took
long walks through the countryside.
I'm alive, she thought. No one is born happy. Everyone has to
make his own happiness. I'm a survivor. I'm young and I'm healthy and wonderful things are going to happen.
On Monday she would go back to work. Back to Evelyn and the girls and Wim Vandeen.
Wim Vandeen was an enigma.
Catherine had never met anyone like him. There were twenty employees in the office, and without even bothering to use a
calculator, Wim Vandeen remembered every employee's salary,
national insurance number and deductions. Although all of this
was on file, he kept all the company records in his head. He
knew the monthly cash flow from each division and how it compared with the previous months, going back five years when
he had started with the company.

Wim Vandeen remembered everything he had ever seen or

heard
or read. The range of his knowledge was incredible. The simplest
questions on any subject would trigger a stream of information,
yet he was antisocial.
Catherine discussed him with Evelyn. 'I don't understand Wim
at all.'
'Wim is an eccentric,' Evelyn said. 'You just have to take him
as he is. All he's interested in is numbers. I don't think he cares
about people.'
'Does he have friends?'
'No.'
'Does he ever date? I mean go
out with girls?'
'No.'
It seemed to Catherine that Wim was isolated and lonely, and
she felt a kinship with him.

Wim's range of knowledge amazed Catherine. One morning,
she developed an earache.
Wim said gruffly, 'This weather's not going to help it much.
You'd better go and see an ear doctor.'
'Thanks, Wim. I . . .'
"The parts of the ear are the auricle, auditory meatus, tympanic
membrane, the chain of ossicles hammer,
anvil and stirrup ympanic
cavity, the semicircular duct, oval window, the eustachan
tube, auditory nerve, and the cochlear duct.' And he walked
away.
On another day, Catherine and Evelyn took Wim to lunch at
the Ram's Head, a local pub. In the back room, customers were
throwing darts.
'Are you interested in sports, Wim?' Catherine asked. 'Have
you ever seen a baseball game?'

'Baseball,' Wim said. 'A baseball is nine and a quarter inches
in circumference. It's made of yarn, wound on a hard rubber
cone and covered with white leather. The bat is usually made of
ash, not more than two and three quarter inches in the greatest
diameter, and not more than forty-two inches in length.'
He knows all the statistics, Catherine thought, but has he ever
felt the excitement of actually doing it?
'Have you ever played any sports? Basketball, for instance?'
'Basketball is played on a wooden or concrete floor. The ball
has a spherical leather cover thirty-one inches in circumference,
inflated by a rubber bladder to thirteen pounds of pressure. It
weighs twenty to twenty-two ounces. Basketball was invented
by James Naismith in eighteen ninety-one.'
Catherine had her answer.

Sometimes Wim could be an embarrassment in public. One
Sunday, Cathenne and Evelyn took Wim to Maidenhead,
on the Thames. They stopped at the Compleat Angler for
lunch. The waiter came up to their table. 'We have fresh clams
today.'
Catherine turned to Wim. 'Do you like clams?'
Wim said, 'There are long clams, quahog, or round clams,
razor clams, surf clams, single shells, and blood clams.'
The waiter was staring at him. 'Would you care to order some,
sir?'
'I don't like clams,' Wim snapped.

Catherine liked the people she was working with, but Wim
became special to her. He was brilliant beyond her comprehension,
and at the same time, he seemed withdrawn and lonely.
Catherine said to Evelyn one day: 'Isn't there some chance

that Wim might lead a normal life? Fall in love and get married?'
Evelyn sighed. 'I told you. He has no emotions. He'll never
get attached to anyone.'
But Catherine did not believe it. Once or twice she had caught
a flash of interest of
affection of
laughter in
Wim's eyes,
and she wanted to draw him out, to help him. Or had it been
her imagination?

One day, the office staff received an invitation to a charity ball
being held at the Savoy.
Catherine walked into Wim's office. 'Wim, do you dance?'
He stared at her. 'A bar and a half of four-four time music
completes one rhythmic unit in a foxtrot. The man starts the
basic step with his left foot and takes two steps forward. The
woman starts with her right foot and takes two steps backward.
The two slow steps are followed by a quick step at right angles
to the slow steps. To dip, the man steps forward on his left foot
and dips slow
then
he moves forward on his right foot slow. Then he moves to the left with his left foot quick.
Then closes
his right foot to his left foot quick.'
Catherine stood there, not knowing what to say. He knows all
the words, but he doesn't understand their meaning.

Constantin Demiris telephoned. It was late at night and Catherine
was preparing to go to bed.

'I hope I didn't disturb you. It's Costa.'
'No, of course not.' She was glad to hear his voice. She had
missed talking to him, asking his advice. After all, he was the
only one in the world who really knew about her past. She felt
as though he were an old friend.
'I've been thinking about you, Catherine. I was concerned
that you might find London a lonely place. After all, you don't
know anyone there.'
'I do get a little lonely sometimes,' Catherine admitted. 'But
I'm coping. I keep remembering what you said. Forget about
the past, live for the future.'
'That's right. Speaking of the future, I'm going to be in London
tomorrow. I would like to take you to dinner.'
'I would enjoy that very much,' Catherine said warmly. She
was looking forward to it. She would have a chance to tell him
how grateful she was to him.
When Constantin Demiris replaced the receiver, he smiled to
himself. The chase is on.

They had dinner at the Ritz. The dining room was elegant and
the food was delicious. But Catherine was too excited to pay
attention to anything except the man who was sitting opposite
her. There was so much she had to tell him.
'You have a wonderful office staff,' Catherine said. 'Wim is
amazing. I've never seen anyone who can . . .'
But Demiris was not listening to the words. He was studying
her, thinking how beautiful she was, and how vulnerable. But I
mustn't rush her, Demiris decided. No, I'll play the game slowly
and savor the victory. This one will be for you, Noelle,

and for
your lover.
'Are you going to be in London long?' Catherine was
asking.

'Just a day or two. I had some business to take care of.'
That
was true. But he knew he could have handled it by
telephone.
No, he had come to London to begin his campaign to draw
Catherine closer to him, to make her emotionally dependent
on
him. He leaned forward.
'Catherine, did I ever tell you about the time I worked in
the
oil fields in Saudi Arabia . . . ?'

Demiris took Catherine to dinner the following night.
'Evelyn told me what a wonderful job you're doing at the
office. I'm going to give you a raise.'
'You've been so generous already,' Catherine protested.
'I . . .'
Demiris looked into her eyes. 'You don't know how generous
lean be.'
Catherine was embarrassed. He's only being kind, she
thought.
/ mustn't imagine things.

The following day, Demiris was ready to leave. 'Would you
like
to ride out to the airport with me, Catherine?'
'Yes.'
She found him fascinating, almost spellbinding. He was
amusing
and brilliant and she was flattered by his attention.
At the airport, Demiris kissed Catherine lightly on the
cheek.
'I'm glad we could spend some time together, Catherine.'
'So am I. Thank you, Costa.'
She stood there watching his plane take off. He's very
special, Catherine thought. I'm going to miss him.

Chapter 6

Everyone had always been amazed by the apparent close
friendship
of Constantin Demiris and his brother-in-law, Spyros
Lambrou.
Spyros Lambrou was almost as rich and powerful as Demiris.
Demiris owned the largest fleet of cargo ships in the
world;
Spyros Lambrou owned the second largest. Constantin
Demiris
controlled a chain of newspapers and airlines, oil fields,
steel
mills, and gold mines; Spyros Lambrou had insurance
companies, banks, enormous amounts of real estate, and a
chemical plant. They seemed friendly competitors; better
than
that, buddies.
'Isn't it wonderful,' people said, 'that two of the most
powerful
men in the world are such great friends?'
In reality, they were implacable rivals who despised each
other. When Spyros Lambrou bought a 100-foot yacht,
Constantin
Demiris immediately commissioned a 150-foot yacht that had
four GM diesels, a crew of 13, two speedboats and a
freshwater
swimming pool.
When Spyros Lambrou's fleet reached a total of twelve
tankers, with a tonnage of 200,000, Constantin Demiris
increased
his own fleet to twenty-three tankers, with a tonnage of
650,000.
Spyros Lambrou acquired a string of race horses, and
Demiris
bought a larger stable to run against him, and
consistently won.
The two men saw each other frequently, for they served
together on charity committees, sat on the boards of
various
corporations, and occasionally attended family gatherings.
They were exactly opposite in temperament. Where
Constantin
Demiris had come from the gutter and fought his way to the
top, Spyros Lambrou was born an aristocrat. He was a lean
and

elegant man, always impeccably dressed, with courtly,
old-world
manners. He could trace his family tree back to Otto of
Bavaria,
who had once ruled as King of Greece. During the early
political
uprisings in Greece, a small minority, the oligarchy,
amassed
fortunes in trade, shipping and land. Spyros Lambrou's
father
was one of them, and Spyros had inherited his empire.
Over the years, Spyros Lambrou and Constantin Demiris had
carried on their charade of friendship. But each was
determined
that, in the end, he would destroy the other, Demiris
because of
his instinct for survival, Lambrou because of his
brother-in-law's
treatment of Melina.
Spyros Lambrou was a superstitious man. He appreciated his
good fortune in life, and he was anxious not to antagonize
the
gods. From time to time he consulted psychics for
guidance. He
was intelligent enough to recognize the frauds, but there
was
one psychic whom he had found to be uncanny. She had
predicted
his sister Melina's miscarriage and what would happen to
the
marriage, and a dozen other things that had come to pass.
She
lived in Athens.
Her name was Madame Piris.

Constantin Demiris made it a habit to arrive at his
offices in
Aghiou Geronda Street every morning punctually at six
o'clock.
By the time his rivals went to work, Demiris had already
conducted
several hours of business with his agents in a dozen
countries.
Demiris' private office was spectacular. The view was

magnificent,
with picture windows putting the city of Athens at his feet.
The floor was black granite. The furniture was steel and leather.
On the walls was a Cubist art collection, with Légers, Braques,
and half a dozen Picassos. There was an enormous glass and
steel desk and a leather throne-chair. On the desk was a death
mask of Alexander the Great, set in crystal. The inscription
under it read: Alexandras. The defender of man.
On this particular morning, Constantin Demiris' private phone
was ringing when he entered his office. There were only half a
dozen people who had access to the telephone number.
Demiris picked up the telephone. 'Kalimehra.'
'Kalimehra.' The voice at the other end belonged to Spyros
Lambrou's private secretary, Nikos Veritos. He sounded nervous.
'Forgive me for disturbing you, Mr Demiris. You told me to
call when I had some information that you might . . .'
'Yes. What is ft?'
'Mr Lambrou is planning to acquire a company called Aurora
International. It is listed on the New York Stock Exchange. Mr
Lambrou has a friend on the board of directors who told him
that a big government contract is going to be given to the
company to build bombers. This is, of course, very confidential.
The stock will have a big rise when the announcement . . .'
'I'm not interested in the stock market,' Demiris snapped.
'Don't bother me again unless you have something important to
tell me.'
'I'm sorry, Mr Demiris. I thought . . .'
But Demiris had hung up.

At eight o'clock, when Demiris' assistant, Giannis Tcharos,

I.1 walked in, Constantin Demiris looked up from his desk. 'There's
a company on the New York Stock Exchange, Aurora International.
Notify all our newspapers that the company is being
investigated for fraud. Use an anonymous source, but spread
the word. I want them to keep hammering at the story until the
stock drops. Then start buying until I have control.'
'Yes, sir. Is that all?'
'No. After I've acquired control, announce that the rumors
were unfounded. Oh, yes. See that the New York Stock Exchange
is notified that Spyros Lambrou bought his stock on
insider information.'
Giannis Tcharos said delicately, 'Mr Demiris, in the United
States, that is a criminal offense.'
Constantin Demiris smiled. 'I know.'

A mile away, at Syntagma Square, Spyros Lambrou was working
in his office. His work place reflected his eclectic taste. The
furniture consisted of rare antiques, a mixture of French and
Italian. Three of the walls were covered with the works of French
Impressionists. The fourth wall was devoted to an array of
Belgian artists, from Van Rysselberghe to De Smet. The sign on
the outer office door read: 'Lambrou and Associates', but there
had never been any associates. Spyros Lambrou had inherited a
successful business from his father, and over the years he had
built it into a worldwide conglomerate.
Spyros Lambrou should have been a happy man. He was rich
and successful, and he enjoyed excellent health. But it was
impossible for him to be truly happy as long as Constantin
Demiris was alive. His brother-in-law was anathema to him.

Lambrou despised him. To him, Demiris was polymichanos, a man fertile in devices, a scoundrel without morals. Lambrou had
always hated Demiris for his treatment of Melina, but the savage
rivalry between them had its own terrible nexus.
It had begun ten years earlier, at a lunch Spyros Lambrou had
with his sister. She had never seen him so excited.
'Melina, did you know that every single day the world consumes
all the fossil fuel it took a thousand years to create?'
'No, Spyros.'
There's going to be a tremendous demand for oil in the future,
and there aren't going to be enough oil tankers to handle it.'
'You're going to build some?'
He nodded. 'But not just ordinary tankers. I'm going to build
the first fleet of large tankers. They'll be twice as large as the
present ones.' His voice was filled with enthusiasm. 'I've spent
months going over the figures. Listen to this. A gallon of crude
petroleum hauled from the Persian Gulf to an east-coast port of
the United States costs seven cents. But on a big tanker, the cost
would come down to three cents a gallon. Do you have any idea
what that could mean?'
'Spyros where
are you going to get the money to build a fleet
like that?'
He smiled. That's the beautiful part of my plan. It won't cost
me a cent.'
'What?'
He leaned forward. 'I'm going to America next month to talk
to the heads of the big oil companies. With these tankers, I can

carry their oil for them for half the price they can
carry it.'
'But. . . you don't have any big tankers.'
His smile turned into a grin. 'No, but if I can get
long-term
charter contracts f/om the oil companies, the banks will
loan me
the money I need to build them. What do you think?'
'I think you're a genius. It's a brilliant plan.'

Melina was so excited about her brother's idea that she
mentioned
it to Demiris that evening at dinner.
When she had finished explaining it, Melina said, 'Isn't
that a
wonderful idea?'
Constantin Demiris was silent for a moment. 'Your
brother's
a dreamer. It could never work.'
Melina looked at him in surprise. 'Why not, Costa?'
'Because it's a hare-brained scheme. In the first place,
there's
not going to be that big a demand for oil, so those
mythical
tankers of his will run empty. Secondly, the oil companies
aren't
about to turn their precious oil over to a phantom fleet
that
doesn't even exist. And third, those bankers he's going to
will
laugh him out of their offices.'
Melina's face clouded with disappointment. 'Spyros was so
enthusiastic. Would you mind discussing it with him?'
Demiris shook his head. 'Let him have his dream, Melina.
It
would be better if he didn't even know about our
conversation.'
'All right, Costa. Whatever you say.'

Early the following morning Constantin Demiris was on his
way
to the United States to discuss large tankers. He was
aware that

the world petroleum reserves outside the United States and
the Soviet-bloc territories were controlled by the seven
sisters:
Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, Standard Oil Company
of California, Gulf Oil, the Texas Company, Socony-Vacuum,
Royal Dutch-Shell and Anglo-Iranian. He knew that if he
could
get just one of them, the others were sure to follow.

Constantin Demiris' first visit was to the executive
offices of
Standard Oil of New Jersey. He had an appointment with
Owen
Curtiss, a fourth vice-president.
'What can I do for you, Mr Demiris?'
'I have a concept that I think could be of great financial
benefit
to your company.'
'Yes, you mentioned that over the telephone.' Curtiss
glanced
at his wristwatch. 'I have a meeting in a few minutes. If
you
could be brief . . .'
till be very brief. It costs you seven cents to haul a
gallon of
crude petroleum from the Persian Gulf to the eastern coast
of
the United States.'
That's correct.'
'What would you say if I told you that I can guarantee to
carry
your oil for three cents a gallon?'
Curtiss smiled patronizingly. 'And just how would you
perform
that miracle?'
Demiris said quietly, 'With a fleet of large tankers that
will
have twice the carrying capacity of the present ones. I
can
transport your oil as fast as you can pump it out of the
ground.'
Curtiss was studying him, his face thoughtful. 'Where
would
you get a fleet of large tankers?'

'I'm going to build them.'
Tm sorry. We wouldn't be interested in investing in . . .'
Demiris interrupted. 'It won't cost you a penny. All I'm asking
from you is a long-term contract to carry your oil at half the
price you're paying now. I'll get my financing from the banks.'
There was a long, pregnant silence. Owen Curtiss cleared his
throat. 'I think I had better take you upstairs to meet our
president.'

That was the beginning. The other oil companies were just as
eager to make deals for Constantin Demiris' new tankers. By
the time Spyros Lambrou learned what was happening, it was
too late. He flew to the United States and was able to make a
few deals for large tankers with some independent companies,
but Demiris had skimmed off the cream of the market.
'He's your husband,' Lambrou stormed, 'but I swear to you,
Melina, some day I'm going to make him pay for what he's done.'
Melina felt miserable about what had happened. She felt she
had betrayed her brother.
But when she confronted her husband, he shrugged. 'I didn't
go to them, Melina. They came to me. How could I refuse them?'
And that was the end of the discussion.

But business considerations were unimportant compared to
Lambrou's feelings about how Demiris treated Melina.
He could have shrugged off the fact that Constantin Demiris
was a notorious philanderer after
all, a man had to have his
pleasure. But Demiris' being so blatant about it was an

insult
not only to Melina but to the whole Lambrou family.
Demiris'
affair with the actress, Noelle Page, had been the most
egregious
example. It had made headlines all over the world. One
day, Spyros Lambrou thought. One day . . .

Nikos Veritos, Lambrou's assistant, walked into the
office. Vertos
had been with Spyros Lambrou for fifteen years. He was
competent, but unimaginative, a man with no future, grey
and
faceless. The rivalry between the two brothers-in-law
presented
Veritos with what he considered a golden opportunity. He
was
betting on Constantin Demiris to win, and from time to
time he
passed on confidential information to him, hoping for a
suitable
reward.
Veritos approached Lambrou. 'Excuse me. There's a Mr
Anthony Rizzoli here to see you.'
Lambrou sighed. 'Let's get it over with,' he said. 'Send
him
in.'
Anthony Rizzoli was in his mid-forties. He had black hair,
a thin
aquiline nose, and deep-set brown eyes. He moved with the
grace
of a trained boxer. He wore an expensive beige tailored
suit, a
yellow silk shirt and soft leather shoes. He was
soft-spoken and
polite, and yet there was something oddly menacing about
him.

'Pleasure to meet you, Mr Lambrou.'
'Sit down, Mr Rizzoli.'
Rizzoli took a seat.
'What can I do for you?'
'Well, as I explained to Mr Veritos here, I'd like to
charter

one of your cargo ships. You see, I have a factory in Marseilles
and I want to ship some heavy machinery to the United States.
If you and me can work out a deal, I can throw a lot of business
your way in the future.'
Spyros Lambrou leaned back in his chair and studied the man
seated in front of him. Unsavory. 'Is that all you're planning to
ship, Mr Rizzoli?' he asked.
Tony Rizzoli frowned, 'What? I don't understand.'
'I think you do,' Lambrou said. 'My ships are not available to
you.'
'Why not? What are you talkin' about?'
'Drugs, Mr Rizzoli. You're a drug dealer.'
Rizzoli's eyes narrowed. 'You're crazy! You've been listenin'
to a lot of rumors.'
But they were more than rumors. Spyros Lambrou had
carefully checked out the man. Tony Rizzoli was one of the top
drug smugglers in Europe. He was Mafia, part of the Organization,
and the word was out that Rizzoli's transportation
sources had dried up. That was why he was so anxious to make
a deal.
'I'm afraid you'll have to go elsewhere.'
Tony Rizzoli sat there, staring at him, his eyes cold. Finally
he nodded. 'Okay.' He took a business card from his pocket and
threw it on the desk. 'If you change your mind, here's where
you can reach me.' He rose to his feet and a moment later he
was gone.
Spyros Lambrou picked up the card. It read Anthony Rizzoli
-Import-Export. There was an Athens hotel address and a
telephone number at the bottom of the card.
Nikos Veritos had sat there wide-eyed, listening to the

conversation.
When Tony Rizzoli walked out the door he said, 'Is he really . . . ?'
'Yes. Mr Rizzoli deals in heroin. If we ever let him use one

of our ships, the government could put our whole fleet out of
business.'

Tony Rizzoli watked out of Lambrou's office in a fury. That
fucking Greek treating me like I'm some peasant off the street!
And how had he known about the drugs? The shipment was an
unusually large one, with a street value of at least ten million
dollars. But the problem was in getting it to New York. The
Goddamned narcs are swarming all over Athens. I'll have to make
a phone call to Sicily and stall. Tony Rizzoli had never lost a
shipment, and he did not intend to lose this one. He thought of
himself as a born winner.
He had grown up in Hell's Kitchen in New York. Geographically,
it was located in the middle of the West Side of Manhattan,
between 8th Avenue and the Hudson River, and its northern
and southern boundaries ran from 23rd to 59th Streets. But
psychologically and emotionally Hell's Kitchen was a city within
a city, an armed enclave. The streets were ruled by gangs. There
were the Gophers, the Parlor Mob, the Gorillas, and the Rhodes
gang. Murder contracts retailed at a hundred dollars, with mayhem
a little less.
The occupants of Hell's Kitchen lived in dirty tenements,
overrun by lice, rats and roaches. There were no bathtubs, and

the youths solved the shortage in their own way; they plunged
naked into the water off the Hudson River docks, where the
sewers from the Kitchen's streets emptied into the river. The
docks stank of the stagnant mass of dead, swollen cats and dogs.
The street scene provided an endless variety of action. A fire
engine answering an alarm ... a gang fight on one of the
tenement roofs ... a wedding procession ... a stickball game
on the sidewalk ... a chase after a runaway horse ... a shooting
. . . The only playgrounds the children had were the streets, the
tenement roofs, the rubbish-strewn vacant lots and in the
summer time the
noisome waters of the river. And over
everything, the acrid smell of poverty. That was the atmosphere
in which Tony Rizzoli had grown up.

Tony Rizzoli's earliest memory was of being knocked down, and
having his milk money stolen. He was seven years old. Older
and bigger boys were a constant threat. The route to school was
a no-man's-land, and the school itself was a battleground. By
the time Rizzoli was fifteen years old he had developed a strong
body and considerable skill as a fighter. He enjoyed fighting,
and because he was good at it, it gave him a feeling of superiority.
He and his friends put on boxing matches at Stillman's Gym.
From time to time, some of the mobsters dropped in to keep
an eye on the fighters they owned. Frank Costello appeared once

or twice a month, along with Joe Adonis and Lucky Luciano.
They were amused by the boxing matches that the youngsters
put on, and as a form of diversion they began to bet on
their
fights. Tony Rizzoli was always the winner, and he quickly
became a favorite of the mobsters.
One day while Rizzoli was changing in the locker room the
young boy overheard a conversation between Frank Costello
and Lucky Luciano. "The kid's a gold mine,' Luciano was
saying.
'I won five grand on him last week.'
'You going to put a bet on his fight with Lou Domenic?'
'Sure. I'm betting ten big ones.'
'What odds do you have to lay?'
'Ten to one. But what the hell? Rizzoli's a shoo-in.'
Tony Rizzoli was not certain what the conversation meant.
He went to his older brother, Gino, and told him about it.
'Jesus!' his brother exclaimed. "Those guys are bettin'
big
money on you.'
'But why? I'm not a professional.'
Gino thought for a moment. 'You've never lost a fight,
have
you, Tony?'
'No.'
'What probably happened is that they made a few small bets
for kicks, and then when they saw what you could do they
began
betting for real.'
The younger boy shrugged. 'It don't mean nothin' to me.'
Gino took his arm and said earnestly, 'It could mean a lot
to
you. To both of us. Listen to me, kid . . .'
1

The fight with Lou Domenic took place at Stillman's Gym
on a
Friday afternoon and all the big boys were there Frank
Costello,
Joe Adonis, Albert Anastasia, Lucky Luciano and Meyer
Lan-sky.
They enjoyed watching the young boys fight, but what they
enjoyed even more was the fact that they had found a way

to
make money on the kids.
Lou Domenic was seventeen, a year older than Tony and five
pounds heavier. But he was no match for Tony Rizzoli's
boxing
skills and killer instinct.
The fight was five rounds. The first round went easily to
young
Tony. The second round also went to him. And the third.
The
mobsters were already counting their money.
'The kid's going to grow up to be a world champion,' Lucky
Luciano crowed. 'How much did you bet on him?'
'Ten grand,' Frank Costello replied. 'The best odds I
could
get was fifteen to one. The kid's already got a
reputation.'
And suddenly, the unexpected happened. In the middle of
the
fifth round, Lou Domenic knocked out Tony Rizzoli with an
upper cut. The referee began to count. . . very slowly,
looking
apprehensively out at the stony-faced audience.
'Get to your feet, you little bastard,' Joe Adonis
screamed.
'Get up and fight!'
The counting went on, and even at that slow pace, it
finally ri reached ten. Tony Rizzoli was still on the mat,
out cold.
11 'Son-of-a-bitch. One lucky punch!'
i'll) The men began to add up their losses. They were
substantial.
Tony Rizzoli was carried to one of the dressing rooms by
Gino.
, Tony kept his eyes tightly closed, afraid that they
would find out
| he was conscious and do something terrible to him.
It was not until Tony was safely home that he began to
relax.
'We did it!' his brother yelled excitedly. 'Do you know
how
much fucking money we made? Almost one thousand dollars.'
'I don't understand. I . . .'
'I borrowed money from their own shylocks to bet on

Domenic,
and got fifteen to one odds. We're rich.'
'Won't they be mad?' Tony asked.
Gino smiled. 'They'll never know.'

The following day when Tony Rizzoli got out of school there
was a long black limousine waiting at the curb. Lucky Luciano
was in the back seat. He waved the boy over to the car.
'Get in.'
Tony Rizzoli's heart began to pound. 'I can't, Mr Luciano,
I'm late for . . .'
'Get in.'
Tony Rizzoli got into the limousine. Lucky Luciano said to
the driver, 'Go around the block.'
Thank God he wasn't being taken for a ride!
Luciano turned to the boy. 'You took a dive,' he said flatly.
Rizzoli flushed. 'No, sir. I . . .'
'Don't shit me. How much did you make on the fight?'
'Nothing, Mr Luciano. I . . .'
till ask you once more. How much did you make by taking
that dive?'
The boy hesitated. 'A thousand dollars.'
Lucky Luciano laughed. That's chicken feed. But I guess for
a ... how old are you?'
'Almost sixteen.'
'I guess for a sixteen-year-old kid, that ain't bad. You know
you cost me and my friends a lot of money.'
'I'm sorry. I '
'Forget it. You're a bright boy. You've got a future.'
Thank you.'
'I'm going to keep quiet about this, Tony, or my friends will
cut your nuts off and feed them to you. But I want you to come
and see me Monday. You and me are going to work together.'

A week later, Tony Rizzoli was working for Lucky Luciano.
Rizzoli started as a numbers runner, and then became an
enforcer.

He was bright and quick and in time he worked himself
up to being Luciano's lieutenant.
When Lucky Luciano was arrested, convicted and sent to
prison, Tony Rizzoli stayed on with Luciano's
organization.

The Families were into gambling, shylocking, prostitution,
and
anything else in which there was an illegal profit to be
made.
Dealing drugs was generally frowned on, but some of the
members
insisted on being involved, and the Families reluctantly
gave
them permission to set up drug trafficking on their own.
The idea became an obsession with Tony Rizzoli. From what
he had seen, the people who were in drug trafficking were
completely disorganized. They're all spinning their
wheels. With
the right brains and muscle behind it. . .
He made his decision.

Tony Rizzoli was not a man to go into anything
haphazardly.
He began by reading everything he could find out about
heroin.
Heroin was fast becoming the king of narcotics. Marijuana
and cocaine provided a 'high', but heroin created a state
of
complete euphoria, with no pain, no problems, no cares.
Those
enslaved by heroin were willing to sell anything they
possessed,
steal anything within their reach, commit any crime.
Heroin
became their religion, their reason for being.
Turkey was one of the leading growers of the poppy from
which heroin was derived.
The Family had contacts in Turkey, so Rizzoli had a talk
with
Pete Lucca, one of the capos.
'I'm going to get involved,' Rizzoli said. 'But anything I
do
will be for the Family. I want you to know that.'

'You're a good boy, Tony.'
'I'd like to go to Turkey to look things over. Can you set it
up?'
The old man hesitated. till send word. But they're not like
us, Tony. They have no morals. They're animals. If they don't
trust you, they'll kill you.'
till be careful.'
'You do that.'
Two weeks later, Tony Rizzoli was on his way to Turkey.
He travelled to Izmir, Afyon, and Eskisehir, the regions where
the poppies were grown, and in the beginning, he was greeted
with deep suspicion. He was a stranger, and strangers were not
welcome.
'We're going to do a lot of business together,' Rizzoli said.
Td like to take a look at the poppy fields.'
A shrug. 'I don't know nothin' about no poppy fields. You're
wastin' your time. Go home.'
But Rizzoli was determined. Half a dozen phone calls were
made and coded cables were exchanged. Finally, in Kilis, on the
Turkish-Syrian border, he was allowed to watch the opium being
harvested at the farm of Carella, one of the large landowners.
'I don't understand it/ Tony said. 'How can you get heroin
from a fuckin' flower?'
A white-coated scientist explained it to him. 'There are several
steps, Mr Rizzoli. Heroin is synthesized from opium, which is
made by treating morphine with acetic acid. Heroin is derived
from a particular strain of poppy plant called Papaver
somni-ferum, the flower of sleep. Opium gets its name from the Greek
word opos, meaning juice.'

'Got you.'

At harvesting time, Tony was invited to visit Carella's main
estate. Each member of Carella's family was equipped with
a cizgi bicak, a scalpel-shaped cutting knife, to make a precise
incision into the plant. Carella explained, 'The poppies have to
be harvested within a twenty-four-hour period or the crop is
ruined.'
There were nine members in the family and each one worked
frantically to make sure the crop was in on time. The air was
filled with fumes that induced drowsiness.
Rizzoli felt groggy. 'Be careful,' Carella warned. 'Stay awake.
If you lie down in the field, you will never get up again.'

The farmhouse windows and doors were kept tightly closed
during the twenty-four-hour period of harvest.

When the poppies had been picked, Rizzoli watched the sticky
white gum transformed from a morphine base into heroin, at a
'laboratory' in the hills.
'So, that's it, huh?'
Carella shook his head. 'No, my friend. That's only the beginning.
Making the heroin is the easiest part. The trick is to
transport it without getting caught.'
Tony Rizzoli felt an excitement building in him. This was
where his expertise was going to take over. Up until now, the
business had been run by bunglers. Now he was going to show
them how a professional operated.
'How do you move this stuff?'
'There are many ways. Truck, bus, train, car, mule, camel . . .'
'Camel?'

'We used to smuggle heroin in cans in the camel's belly
until the guards started using metal detectors. So we
switched to
rubber bags. At the end of the trip we kill the camels.
The
problem is that sometimes the bags burst inside the
camels, and
the animals stagger up to the border like drunks. So the
guards
caught on.'
'What route do you use?'
'Sometimes the heroin is routed from Aleppo, Beirut and
Istanbul, and on to Marseilles. Sometimes the drugs go
from
Istanbul to Greece, then on to Sicily through Corsica and
Morocco and across the Atlantic.'
'I appreciate your cooperation,' Rizzoli said. till tell
the boys.
I have another favor to ask of you.'
'Yes?'
'I'd like to go along with the next shipment.'
There was a long pause. 'That could be dangerous.'
till take my chances.'

The following afternoon, Tony Rizzoli was introduced to a
large,
hulking bandit of a man, with a grandiose, flowing
mustache,
and the body of a tank. 'This is Mustafa from Afyon. In
Turkish, afyon means opium. Mustafa is one of our most
skilled smugglers.'
'One has to be skilled,' Mustafa said modestly. 'There are
many dangers.'
Tony Rizzoli grinned. 'But it's worth the risk, eh?'
Mustafa said with dignity, 'You are speaking of money. To

us, opium is more than a money crop. There is a mystique
about
it. It is the one crop that is more than food alone. The
white sap
of the plant is a God-given elixir which is a natural
medicine if
taken in small quantities. It can be eaten, or applied
directly to

the skin, and it will cure most of the common ailments
upset stomachs, colds, fever, aches, pains, sprains. But you must be
careful. If you take it in large amounts, not only will it cloud the
senses, it will rob you of your sexual prowess, and nothing in
Turkey could more destroy a man's dignity than impotence.'
'Sure. Anything you say.'

The journey from Afyon began at midnight. A group of farmers,
walking single file through the black night, rendezvoused with
Mustafa. The mules were loaded with opium, 350 kilos, more
than 700 pounds, strapped to the backs of seven stout mules.
The sweet pungent odor of the opium, like wet hay, hovered in
the air about the men. There were a dozen farmers who had
come to guard the opium in the transaction with Mustafa. Each
farmer was armed with a rifle.
'We have to be careful these days,' Mustafa told Rizzoli. 'We
have Interpol and many police looking for us. In the old days,
it was more fun. We used to transport opium through a village
or the city in a casket draped in black. It was a heartwarming
sight to see the people and the police on the street, lifting their
hats and saluting in respect as a coffin of opium went by.'
The province of Afyon lies in the center of the western third
of Turkey at the foot of the Sultan Mountains on a high plateau,
remote and virtually isolated from the nation's leading cities.
'This terrain is very good for our work,' Mustafa said. 'We are
not easy to find.'

The mules moved slowly through the desolate mountains, and
at midnight, three days later, they reached the
Turkish-Syrian
border. There they were met by a woman dressed in black.
She
was leading a horse carrying an innocent sack of flour,
and there
was a hemp rope knotted loosely on its saddle horn. The
rope
trailed behind the horse, but it never touched the ground.
It was
a long rope, two hundred feet in length. The other end was
held
up by Mustafa and his fifteen hired runners behind him.
They
walked in a crouch, each bent over close to the ground,
one
hand holding the rope line, and the other clutching a
gunny sack
of opium. Each $ack weighed thirtyfive pounds. The woman
and her horse walked through a stretch booby-trapped with
anti-personnel mines, but there was a path that had been
cleared
by a small herd of sheep driven through the area earlier.
If the
rope fell to the earth, the slack was a signal to Mustafa
and the
others that there were gendarmes up ahead. If the woman
was
taken in for questioning, then the smugglers would safely
move
on ahead across the border.
They crossed at Kilis, the border point, which was heavily
mined. Once past the area controlled by the gendarme
patrols,
the smugglers moved into the buffer zone three miles wide,
until
they reached their rendezvous, where they were greeted by
Syrian smugglers. They put their sacks of opium on the
ground
and were presented with a bottle of raki which the men
passed
from one to the other. Rizzoli watched as the opium was
weighed,

stacked, tied and secured upon the sway-backs of a dozen
dirty
Syrian donkeys. The job was done.
All right, Rizzoli thought. Now let's see how the boys in
Thailand do it.

Rizzoli's next stop was Bangkok. When his bona fides had
been
established he was allowed on a Thai fishing vessel that
carried
drugs wrapped in polyethylene sheeting packed into empty
kerosene
drums, with rings attached to the top. As the shipping
boats
approached Hong Kong they jettisoned the drums in a neat
row
in shallow water around Lima and the Ladrone Islands,
where
it was simple for a Hong Kong fishing boat to pick them up
with
a grappling hook.
'Not bad,' Rizzoli said. But there has to be a better way.

The growers referred to heroin as 'they' and 'horse', but
to Tony
Rizzoli, heroin was gold. The profits were staggering. The
peasants who grew the raw opium were paid three hundred
fifty

dollars for ten kilos but by the time the opium was
processed
and sold on the streets of New York, its value had
increased to
two hundred fifty thousand dollars.
It's so easy, Rizzoli thought. Carella was right. The
trick is not
to get caught.
That had been in the beginning, ten years ealier. But now
it
was more difficult. Interpol, the international police
force, had
recently put drug smuggling at the top of its list. All
vessels
leaving the key smuggling ports that looked even slightly

suspicious
were boarded and searched. That was why Rizzoli had
gone to Spyros Lambrou. His fleet was above suspicion. It
was
unlikely that the police would search one of his cargo
ships. But
the bastard had turned him down. I'll find another way,
Tony
Rizzoli thought. But I'd better find it fast.

'Catherine am
I disturbing you?'
It was midnight. 'No, Costa. It's nice to hear your
voice.'
'Is everything going well?'
'Yes thanks
to you. I'm really enjoying my job/
'Good. I'll be coming to London in a few weeks. I'll look
forward to seeing you.' Careful. Don't push too fast. 'I
want to
discuss some of the company's personnel.'
'Fine.'
'Good night, then.'

'Good night.'

This time she was calling him. 'Costa -1 don't know what
to say.
The locket is beautiful. You shouldn't have . . .'
'It's a small token, Catherine. Evelyn told me what a big
help
you are to her. I just wanted to express my appreciation.'

It's so easy, Demiris thought. Little gifts and flattery.
Later: My wife and I are separating.
Then the 'I'm so lonely' stage.
A vague talk of marriage and an invitation to travel on
his

I

IWcht to his island. The routine never failed. This is

going to be
iparticularly exciting, Demiris thought, because it's
going to have a 0 different ending. She's going to die.

He telephoned Napoleon Chotas. The lawyer was delighted to
hear from him. 'It's been a while, Costa. Everything goes
well?'
'Yes, thank you. I need a favor.'
'Of course.'
'Noelle Page owned a little villa in Rafina. I want you to
buy
it for me, under someone else's name.'
'Certainly. I'll have one of the lawyers in my office . .
.'
'I want you to handle it personally.'
There was a pause. 'Very well. I'll take care of it.'
Thank you.'
Napoleon Chotas sat there, staring at the phone. The villa
was
the love nest where Noelle Page and Larry Douglas had
carried
on their affair. What could Constantin Demiris possibly
want
with it?

Chapter 7

The Arsakion Courthouse in downtown Athens is a large,
grey
stone building that takes up the entire square block at
University
Street and Strada. Of the thirty courtrooms in the
building, only
three rooms are reserved for criminal trials: rooms 21, 30
and
33.
Because of the enormous interest generated by the murder
trial of Anastasia Savalas, it was being held in room 33.
The
courtroom was forty feet wide and three hundred feet long,
and
the seats were divided into three blocks, six feet apart,
with nine
wooden benches to each row. At the front of the courtroom

was a raised dais behind a six-foot mahogany partition,
with high-backed chairs for the three presiding judges.
In front of the dais was a witness stand, a small raised platform
on which was fixed a reading lectern, and against the far wall
was a jury box, filled now with its ten jurors. In front of the
defendant's box was the lawyers' table.
The murder trial was spectacular enough in itself, but the piece
de resistance was the fact that the defense was being conducted
by Napoleon Chotas, one of the preeminent criminal lawyers in
the world. Chotas tried only murder cases, and he had a remarkable
record of success. His fees were rumored to be in the millions
of dollars. Napoleon Chotas was a thin, emaciated-looking man
with the large sad eyes of a bloodhound in a corrugated face.
He dressed badly, and his physical appearance did nothing to
inspire confidence. But behind his vaguely baffled manner was
hidden a brilliant, trenchant mind.
The press had speculated furiously about why Napoleon
Chotas had agreed to defend the woman on trial. There was no
way he could possibly win the case. Wagers were being made
that it would be Chotas' first defeat.
Peter Demonides, the Prosecuting Attorney, had come up
against Chotas before, and though
he would never admit it,
even to himself he
was in awe of Chotas' skill. This time,
however, Demonides felt that he had little to worry about. If
ever there was a classic open-and-shut murder case, the Anastasia
Savalas trial was It.
The facts were simple: Anastasia Savalas was a beautiful

young
woman married to a wealthy man named George Savalas, who
was thirty years her senior. Anastasia had been having an
affair
with their young chauffeur, Josef Pappas, and, according
to
witnesses, her husband had threatened to divorce Anastasia
and write her out of his will. On the night of the murder,
she
had dismissed the servants and prepared dinner for her
husband.
George Savalas had had a cold. During dinner, he had
suffered a coughing spell. His wife had brought him his
bottle
of cough medicine. Savalas had taken one swallow and
dropped
dead.
An open-and-shut case.

Room 33 was crowded with spectators on this early morning.
Anastasia Savalas was seated at the defendant's table
dressed in
a simple black skirt and blouse, with no jewelry and very
little
make-up. She was stunningly beautiful.
The prosecutor, Peter Demonides, was addressing the jury.
'Ladies and gentlemen. Sometimes, in a murder case, a
trial
takes up to three or four months. But I don't think any of
you
'/ are going to have to worry about being here for that
length of
/ time. When you hear the facts in this case, I'm sure you
will >j agree without question that there is only one
possible verdict urder
in the first degree. The State will prove that the
defendant
willfully murdered her husband because he threatened to
divorce
her when he found out she was having an affair with the
family
chauffeur. We will prove that the defendant had the
motive,
the opportunity, and the means to carry out her

cold-blooded
<him scheme. Thank you.' He returned to his seat. * The
Chief Justice turned toward Chotas: 'Is the counsel for
'< the defense prepared to make his opening statement?'
Napoleon Chotas rose slowly to his feet. 'Yes, Your
Honor.'

He moved toward the jury box in an uncertain, shuffling
gait.
He stood there blinking at them, and when he spoke it was
almost as though he were speaking to himself. 'I've lived
a long
time, and I've learned that no man or woman can hide an
evil
nature. It always shows. A poet once said that the eyes
are
the windows of the soul. I believe that's true. I want you
ladies
and gentlemen to look into the eyes of the defendant.
There
is no way she could have found it in her heart to murder
anyone.'^Napoleon Chotas stood there a moment as though
trying to think of something else to say, then shuffled
back to
his seat.
Peter Demonides was filled with a sudden sense of triumph.
Jesus Christ. Thai's the weakest opening I have ever heard in
my
life! The old man's lost it.
'Is the Prosecuting Attorney prepared to call his first
witness?'
'Yes, Your Honor. I would like to call Rosa Lykourgos.'
A middle-aged, heavy-set woman rose from the spectators'
bench and sailed determinedly toward the front of the
courtroom.
She was sworn in.
'Mrs Lykourgos, what is your occupation?'
'I am the housekeeper . . .' Her voice choked up, 'I was
the
housekeeper to Mr Savalas.'
'Mr George Savalas?'
'Yes, sir.'
'And would you tell us how long you were employed by Mr
Savalas?'

'Twenty-five years.'
'My, that's a long time. Were you fond of your employer?'
'He was a saint.'
'Were you employed by Mr Savalas during his first marriage?'
'Yes, sir. I was at the graveside with him when his wife was
buried.'
'Would it be fair to say that they had a good relationship?'
'They were madly in love with each other.'
Peter Demonides looked over at Napoleon Chotas, waiting for his objection on the line of questioning. But Chotas remained
in his seat, apparently lost in thought.
Peter Demonides went on. 'And were you in Mr Savalas'

employ during his second marriage, to Anastasia Savalas?'
'Oh, yes, sir. I certainly was.' She spat the words out.
'Would you say that it was a happy marriage?' Again he glanced at Napoleon Chotas, but there was no reaction.
'Happy? No, sir. 1*hey fought like cats and dogs.'
'Did you witness any of these fights?'
'A person couldn't help it. You could hear them all over the
house and
it's a big house.'
'I take it these fights were verbal, rather than physical? That
is, Mr Savalas never struck his wife?'
'Oh, it was physical all right. But it was the other way around,
it was the madam who struck him. Mr Savalas was getting on in
years, and the poor man had become frail.'
'You actually saw Mrs Savalas strike her husband?'
'More than once.' The witness looked over at Anastasia Savalas, and there was grim satisfaction in her voice.
'Mrs Lykourgos, on the night Mr Savalas died, which members
of the staff were working in the house?'
'None of us.'
Peter Demonides let his voice register surprise. 'You mean in

a house that you say was so large, not one member of the staff
was there? Didn't Mr Savalas employ a cook, or a maid ... a
butler . . . ?'
'Oh, yes, sir. We had all of those. But the madam told
everyone to take that night off. She said she wanted to cook
dinner for her husband herself. It was going to be a second
honeymoon.' The last remark was said with a snort. v 'So
Mrs Savalas got rid of everybody?'
|! This time it was the Chief Justice who looked over at Napoleon
Chotas, waiting for him to object. But the attorney sat there,
preoccupied.
The Chief Justice turned to Demonides. "The Prosecutor will
stop leading the witness.'
'I apologize, Your Honor. I'll rephrase the question.'
Demonides moved closer to Mrs Lykourgos. 'What you are
saying is that on a night when members of the staff ordinarily
would be in the house, Mrs Savalas ordered everyone to leave
so that she could be alone with her husband?'
'Yes, sir. And the poor man was suffering from a terrible
cold.'

'Did Mrs Savalas often cook dinner for her husband?'

Mrs Lykourgos sniffed. 'Her? No, sir. Not her. She never
lifted a finger around the house.'

And Napoleon Chotas sat there, listening as though he were
merely a spectator.

'Thank you, Mrs Lykourgos. You've been very helpful.'

Peter Demonides turned to Chotas, trying to conceal his
satisfaction. Mrs Lykourgos' testimony had had a perceptible
effect on the jury. They were casting disapproving glances

at the
defendant. Let's see the old man try to get around that.
'Your
witness.'

Napoleon Chotas glanced up. 'What? Oh, no questions.'

The Chief Justice looked at him in surprise. 'Mr Chotas .
. .
you don't wish to cross-examine this witness?'

Napoleon Chotas rose to his feet. 'No, Your Honor. She
seems like a perfectly honest woman.' He sat down again.

Peter Demonides could not believe his good fortune. My
God, he thought, he's not even putting up a fight. The old
man's
finished. Demonides was already savoring his victory.

The Chief Justice turned to the Prosecuting Attorney. 'You
may call your next witness.'

'The State would like to call Josef Pappas.'

A tall, good-looking, dark-haired young man rose from the
spectators' bench and walked toward the witness box. He
was
sworn in.

Peter Demonides began. 'Mr Pappas, would you please tell
the court your occupation?'

'I'm a chauffeur.'

'Are you employed at the moment?'

'No.'

'But you were employed until recently. That is, you were
employed until the death of George Savalas.'

'That's right.'

'How long were you employed by the Savalas family?'

'A little over a year.'

'Was it a pleasant job?'

Josef Pappas had one eye on Chotas, waiting for him to come
to his rescue. There was only silence.
'Was it a pleasant job, Mr Pappas?'
'It was okay, I guess.'
'Did you get a gooft salary?'
'Yes.'
'Then wouldn't you say the job was more than okay? I mean,
weren't there some extras that went along with it? Weren't you
going to bed regularly with Mrs Savalas?'
Josef Pappas looked toward Napoleon Chotas for help. But
there was none.
'I ... Yes, sir. I guess I was.'
Peter Demonides was withering in his scorn. 'You guess you
were? You're under oath. You either had an affair with her or
you didn't. Which is it?'
Pappas was squirming in his seat. 'We had an affair.'
'Even though you were working for her husband being paid
generously by him, and living under his roof?'
'Yes, sir.'
'It didn't bother you, to take Mr Savalas' money week after
week while you were having an affair with his wife?'
'It wasn't just an affair.'
Peter Demonides baited the trap carefully. 'It wasn't just an
affair? What do you mean by that? I'm afraid I don't
understand.'
'I mean me
and Anastasia were planning to get married.'
There was a surprised murmur from the courtroom. The jurors
were staring at the defendant.
'Was the marriage your idea, or Mrs Savalas'?'
'Well, we both wanted to.'
'Who suggested it?'

'I guess she did.' He looked over toward where Anastasia Savalas was seated. She returned his look without flinching.
'Frankly, Mr Pappas, I'm puzzled. How did you expect to get
married? Mrs Savalas already had a husband, hadn't she? Did
you plan to wait for him to die of old age? Or have a fatal
accident of some kind? What exactly did you have in mind?'
The questions were so inflammatory that the Prosecutor and the three judges looked toward Napoleon Chotas, waiting for
him to thunder an objection. But the defense lawyer was busily
doodling, paying no attention. Anastasia Savalas, too, was beginning
to look concerned.

Peter Demonides pressed his advantage. 'You haven't answered my question, Mr Pappas.'

Josef Pappas shifted uncomfortably in his chair. 'I don't know,
exactly.'

Peter Demonides' voice was a whiplash. 'Then let me tell you, exactly. Mrs Savalas planned to murder her husband to get him
out of the way. She knew that her husband was going to divorce
her and cut her out of his will, and that she would be left with
nothing. She

'Objection!' It came not from Napoleon Chotas, but from the
Chief Justice. 'You're asking the witness to speculate.' He looked
over at Napoleon Chotas, surprised at the silence of the lawyer.
The old man was sitting back on the bench, his eyes half-closed.

'Sorry, Your Honor.' But he knew he had made his point.
Peter Demonides turned to Chotas. 'Your witness.'

Napoleon Chotas rose. 'Thank you, Mr Demonides. No questions.'

The three Justices turned to look at one another, puzzled.
One of them spoke up: 'Mr Chotas, you are aware that this will
be your only opportunity to cross-examine this witness?'

Napoleon Chotas blinked. 'Yes, Your Honor.'

'In view of his testimony, you don't wish to ask him any questions?'

Napoleon Chotas waved a hand in the air and said, vaguely,
'No, Your Honor.'

The judge sighed, 'Very well. The Prosecutor may call his next
witness.'

The next witness was Mihalis Haritonides, a burly man in his
sixties.

When Haritonides was sworn in, the Prosecutor asked: 'Would
you tell the court your occupation, please?'

'Yes, sir. I manage a hotel.'

'Would you tell us the name of the hotel?'

'The Argos.'

'And this hotel is located where?'

'In Corfu.'
'I'm going to ask you, Mr Haritonides, whether any of the
people in this room have ever stayed at your hotel.'
Haritonides looked around and said, 'Yes, sir. Him and her.'

'Let the recofd show that the witness is pointing to Josef Pappas and Anastasia Savalas.' He turned back to the witness.
'Did they stay at your hotel more than once?'
'Oh, yes, sir. They were there half a dozen times, at least.'
'And they spent the night there, together, in the same room?'
'Yes, sir. They usually came for the weekend.'
'Thank you, Mr Haritonides.' He looked at Napoleon Chotas. 'Your witness.'
'No questions.'
The Chief Justice turned to the other two Justices, and they
whispered among themselves for a moment.
The Chief Justice looked toward Napoleon Chotas. 'You have no questions for this witness, Mr Chotas?'
'No, Your Honor. I believe his testimony. It's a nice hotel.
I've stayed there myself.'
The Chief Justice stared at Napoleon Chotas for a long moment.
Then he turned to the Prosecutor. 'The State may call its next witness.'
'The State would like to call Dr Vassilis Frangescos.'
A tall, distinguished-looking man rose and moved toward the
witness box. He was sworn in.
'Dr Frangescos, would you be good enough to tell the court what kind of medicine you practice?'
'I'm a general practitioner.'
'Is that equivalent to a family doctor?'
'It's another way of putting it, yes.'
'How long have you been in practice, Doctor?'
'Almost thirty years.'
'And you are licensed by the State, of course.'
'Of course.'
'Dr Frangescos, was George Savalas a patient of yours?'
'Yes, he was.'
'For what period of time?'
'A little more than ten years.'

'And were you treating Mr Savalas for any specific problem?'

'Well, the first time I saw him, he came to me because he had
high blood pressure.'
'And you treated him for that.'
'Yes.'
'But you saw him after that?'
'Oh, yes. He would come to see me from time to time when he had bronchitis, or a liver ailment nothing serious.'
'When was the last time you saw Mr Savalas?'
'In December of last year.'
'That was shortly before he died.'
That's right.'
'Did he come to your office, Doctor?'
'No. I went to see him at his home.'
'Do you usually make house calls?'
'Not usually, no.'
'But in this case you made an exception.'
'Yes.'
'Why?'
The doctor hesitated. 'Well, he wasn't in any shape to come
to the office.'
'What shape was he in?'
'He had lacerations, some bruised ribs, and a concussion.'
'Was he in some kind of accident?'
Dr Frangescos hesitated. 'No. He told me he had been beaten
by his wife.'
There was an audible gasp from the courtroom.
The Chief Justice said, angrily, 'Mr Chotas, aren't you going
to object to putting hearsay testimony into the record?'
Napoleon Chotas looked up and said mildly, 'Oh, thank you, Your Honor. Yes, I object.'
But, of course, the damage had already been done. The jurors
were now looking at the defendant with overt hostility.
'Thank you, Dr Frangescos. No more questions.' Peter Demonides turned to Chotas and said smugly, 'Your witness.'
'No questions.'

There followed a steady flow of witnesses: a maid who

testified
that she had seen Mrs Savalas going into the chauffeur's quarters
on several occasions ... a butler who testified that he had heard
George Savalas threaten to divorce his wife and change his will
. . . neighbors who had heard the noisy arguments between the
Savalases . . .
And still Napoleon Chotas had no questions for any of the witnesses.
The net was fast closing in on Anastasia Savalas.
Peter Demonides could already feel the glow of victory. In his
mind's eye he could see the headlines in the newspapers. This
trial was going to be the fastest murder trial in history. This trial
could even end today, he thought. The great Napoleon Chotas is
a beaten man.
'I would like to call Mr Niko Mentakis to the stand.'
Mentakis was a thin, earnest young man, with a slow and
careful manner of speech.
'Mr Mentakis, would you tell the court your occupation please?'
'Yes, sir. I work at a nursery.'
'You take care of children?' \ 'Oh no, sir. It's not that kind of nursery. We have trees and
flowers, and all kinds of plants.' I 'Oh, I see. So you
are an expert on growing things.'
'I should be. I've been at it for a long time.'
'And I presume that a part of your job is to make sure that
the plants you have for sale stay healthy?'
'Oh, yes, sir. We take very good care of them. We wouldn't
sell any ailing plants to our customers. Most of them are
regulars.'
'By that, you mean the same customers keep coming back to you?'
'Yes, sir.' His voice was proud. 'We give good service.'
'Tell me, Mr Mentakis, was Mrs Savalas one of your regular
customers?'

'Oh, yes, sir. Mrs Savalas loves plants and flowers.'
The Chief Justice said impatiently, 'Mr Demonides, the court
does not feel that this line of questioning is pertinent. Would
you move on to something else, or . . .'
'If the court will let me finish, Your Honor, this witness has a
very important bearing on the case.'

The Chief Justice looked toward Napoleon Chotas. 'Mr Chotas, do you have any objection to this line of questioning?'

Napoleon Chotas looked up and blinked. 'What? No, Your Honor.'

The Chief Justice stared at him in frustration, and then turned
to Peter Demonides. 'Very well. You may proceed.'

'Mr Mentakis, did Mrs Savalas come to you one day in December and tell you that she was having problems with some
of her plants?'

'Yes, sir. She did.'

'In fact, didn't she say that there was an infestation of insects
that was destroying her plants?'

'Yes, sir.'

'And didn't she ask you for something to get rid of them?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Would you tell the court what it was?'

'I sold her some antimony.'

'And would you tell the court exactly what that is?'

'It's a poison, like arsenic.'

There was an uproar from the courtroom.

The Chief Justice slammed down his gavel. 'If there's another
outburst, I'm going to order the bailiff to clear this court.'
He turned to Peter Demonides. 'You may continue the questioning.'

'So you sold her a quantity of antimony.'

'Yes, sir.'

'And would you say it's a deadly poison? You compared it to
arsenic.'

'Oh, yes, sir. It's deadly, all right.'

'And you entered the sale in your record book, as you are required to do by law when you sell any poison?'

'Yes, sir.'

'And did you bring those records with you, Mr Mentakis?'

'I did.' He handed Peter Demonides a ledger.

The Prosecuting Attorney walked over to the judges. 'Your Honors, I would like this to be labelled Exhibit A.' He turned

to the witness. 'I have no more questions.' He looked over at
Napoleon Chotas.
Napoleon Chotas looked up and shook his head. 'No questions.'
Peter Demoltiides took a deep breath. It was time for his bombshell. 'I would like to introduce Exhibit B.' He turned
toward the back of the room, and said to a bailiff standing near

the door, 'Would you bring it in now, please?'
The bailiff hurried out and a few moments later he returned
carrying a bottle of cough syrup on a tray. There was a noticeable
amount missing. The spectators watched, fascinated, as the
bailiff handed the bottle to the Prosecutor. Peter Demonides
placed it on a table in front of the jurors.
'Ladies and gentlemen, you are looking at the murder weapon.
This is the weapon that killed George Savalas. This is the cough
syrup that Mrs Savalas administered to her husband on the night
he died. It is loaded with antimony. As you can see, the victim
swallowed some and
twenty minutes later he was dead.'
Napoleon Chotas rose to his feet, and said mildly, 'Objection.
There is no way the Prosecuting Attorney has of knowing that it
was from that particular bottle that the deceased was medicated.'
And Peter Demonides slammed the trap shut. 'With all due
respect to my learned colleague, Mrs Savalas has admitted that
she gave her husband this syrup during a coughing spell on the
night he died. It has been kept under lock and key by the police
until it was brought into this court a few minutes ago. The
coroner has testified that George Savalas died of antimony
poisoning. This cough syrup is loaded with antimony.' He looked
at Napoleon Chotas challengingly.
Napoleon Chotas shook his head in defeat. 'Then I guess
there's no doubt.'
Peter Demonides said triumphantly, 'None at all. Thank you,
Mr Chotas. The prosecution rests its case.'
The Chief Justice turned to Napoleon Chotas. 'Is the

defense
ready for its summation?'
Napoleon Chotas rose. 'Yes, Your Honour.'
He stood there for a long moment. Then he slowly ambled
forward. He stood in front of the jury box, scratching his
head

as though trying to figure out what he was going to say.
When
he finally began, he spoke slowly, searching for words.
'I suppose some of you must be wondering why I haven't
cross-examined any of the witnesses. Well, to tell you the
truth,
I thought Mr Demonides here did such a fine job that it
wasn't
necessary for me to ask them any questions.'
The fool is pleading my case for me, Peter Demonides
thought
gleefully.
Napoleon Chotas turned to look at the bottle of cough
syrup
for a moment, then turned back to the jurors. 'All the
witnesses
seemed very honest. But they didn't really prove anything,
did
they? What I mean is . . .' He shook his head. 'Well, when
you
add everything up that those witnesses said, it comes down
to
just one thing: a pretty young girl is married to an old
man who
probably couldn't satisfy her sexually.' He nodded toward
Josef
Pappas. 'So she found a young man who could. But we all
knew
that much from the newspapers, didn't we? There's nothing
secret about their affair. The whole world knew about it.
It's
been written up in every trashy magazine in the world.
Now,
you and I might not approve of her behavior, ladies and
gentlemen,
but Anastasia Savalas is not on trial here for adultery.
She's not in this court because she has normal sexual

urges that
any young woman might have. No, she's being tried in this court
for murder.'
He turned to look at the bottle again, as though fascinated
by it.
Let the old man rave on, Peter Demonides thought. He glanced
up at the clock on the courtroom wall. It was five minutes to
twelve. The judges always called a recess at noon. The old fool
won't be able to finish his summation. He wasn't even smart
enough to wait until court was recessed again. Why was I ever
afraid of him? Peter Demonides wondered.
Napoleon Chotas was rambling on. 'Let's examine the evidence
together, shall we? Some plants of Mrs Savalas were ailing
and she cared enough about them to want to save them. She
went to Mr Mentakis, a plant expert, who advised her to use
antimony. So she followed his advice. Do you call that murder?
I certainly don't. And then there's the testimony of the house8

keeper, who said that Mrs Savalas sent all the servants away so
she could have a honeymoon dinner with her husband that she
was going to prepare for him. Well, I think the truth is that the
housekeeper was probably half in love with Mr Savalas herself.
You don't workvfor a man for twenty-five years unless you have
pretty deep feelings for him. She resented Anastasia Savalas.
Couldn't you tell that from her tone?' Chotas coughed slightly
and cleared his throat. 'So, let us assume that the

defendant,
deep in her heart, really loved her husband, and she was trying
desperately to make the marriage work. How does any woman
show love for a man? Well, one of the most basic ways, I guess,
is to cook for him. Isn't that a form of love? I think it is.' He
turned to look at the bottle again. 'And isn't another to tend to
him when he's ill in
sickness and in health?'
The clock on the wall showed one minute to twelve.
'Ladies and gentlemen, I told you when this trial began to
look into the face of this woman. That's not the face of a
murderess. Those aren't the eyes of a killer.'
Peter Demonides watched the jurors as they stared at the
defendant. He had never seen such open hostility. He had the
jury in his pocket.
'The law is very clear, ladies and gentlemen. As you will be
informed by our honorable judges, in order to return a verdict
of guilty, you must have no doubt at all about the guilt of the
defendant. None.'
As Napoleon Chotas talked, he coughed again, drawing a
handkerchief from his pocket to cover his mouth. He walked
over to the bottle of syrup on the table in front of the jury.
'When you come right down to it, the Prosecutor hasn't proved
anything, really, has he? Except that this is the bottle Mrs Savalas
handed to her husband. The truth is, the State has no case at
all.' As he finished the sentence, he had a coughing spell.
Unconsciously, he reached for the bottle of cough medicine,
unscrewed the cap, raised the bottle to his lips and took a large
swallow. Everyone in the courtroom stared, mesmerized, and

there was a gasp of horror.
The courtroom was in an uproar.
The Chief Justice said in alarm, 'Mr Chotas . . .'
Napoleon Chotas took another swallow. 'Your Honor, the
Prosecutor's case is a mockery of justice. George Savalas did not
die at the hands of this woman. The defense rests its case.'
The clock struck twelve. A bailiff hurried up to the Chief
Justice and whispered.
The Chief Justice pounded his gavel. 'Order! Order! We are
going to recess. The jury will retire and try to reach a verdict.
Court will reconvene at two o'clock.'

Peter Demonides was standing there, transfixed. Someone
had switched bottles! But no, that was impossible. The evidence
had been guarded every moment. Could the pathologist have
been that wrong? Demonides turned to speak to his assistant,
and when he looked around for Napoleon Chotas, he had
disappeared.

At two o'clock, when the court reconvened, the jury slowly filed
into the courtroom and took their seats. Napoleon Chotas was
missing.
The son-of-a-bitch is dead, Peter Demonides thought.
And even as he was thinking it, Napoleon Chotas walked
through the door, looking perfectly healthy. Everyone in the
courtroom turned around to stare at him as he walked to his
seat.
The Chief Justice said, 'Ladies and gentlemen of the jury,
have you reached a verdict?'
The foreman of the jury stood up. 'We have, Your Honor.
We find the defendant not guilty.'
There was a spontaneous burst of applause from the
spectators.
Peter Demonides felt the blood drain from his face. The
bastard has done it to me again, he thought. He glanced up

and
Napoleon Chotas was watching him, grinning.

Chapter 8
**

The firm of Tritsis and Tritsis was without question the
most
prestigious law firm in Greece. The founders had long
since
retired, and the firm belonged to Napoleon Chotas. There
were
half a dozen partners, but Chotas was the guiding genius.
Whenever people of wealth were accused of murder, their
thoughts invariably turned to Napoleon Chotas. His record
was
phenomenal. In his years of defending people accused of
capital
crimes, Chotas had scored success after success. The
recent trial
of Anastasia Savalas had made headlines all over the
world.
Chotas had defended a client in what everyone thought was
a
clear-cut case of murder, and he had won a spectacular
victory.
He had taken a big risk with that one, but he had known
that it
was the only way he could save his client's life.
He smiled to himself as he recalled the faces of the
jurors
when he had taken a swallow of the syrup loaded with a
deadly
poison. He had carefully timed his summation so that he
would
be interrupted at exactly twelve o'clock. That was the key
to
everything. If the judges had changed their fixed routine
and
gone past twelve o'clock ... He shuddered to think what
would
have happened.
As it was, an unexpected occurrence had arisen that had
nearly

cost him his life. After the recess, Chotas was hurrying down the
corridor when a group of reporters blocked his path.
'Mr Chotas, how did you know the cough syrup wasn't poisoned . . . ?'
'Can you explain how . . . ?'
'Do you think someone switched bottles . . . ?'
'Did Anastasia Savalas have . . . ?'
'Please, gentlemen. I'm afraid I have to answer a call of nature.
I'll be happy to answer your questions later.'
He hurried on to the men's room at the end of the corridor.
A sign on the knob read: 'Out of Order'.
A reporter said, 'I guess you'll have to find another men's
room.'
Napoleon Chotas grinned. 'I'm afraid I can't wait.' He pushed
the door open, walked in and locked it behind him.
The team was inside, waiting for him. The doctor complained,
'I was beginning to get worried. Antimony works fast.' He
snapped at his assistant. 'Get the stomach pump ready.'
'Yes, Doctor.'
The doctor turned to Napoleon Chotas. 'Lie on the floor. I'm
afraid this is going to be unpleasant.'
'When I consider the alternative,' Napoleon Chotas grinned,
'I'm sure I won't mind.'

Napoleon Chotas' fee for saving Anastasia Savalas' life was one
million dollars, deposited in a Swiss bank account. Chotas had
a palatial home in Kolonarai a lovely residential section of
Athens a
villa on the island of Corfu, and an apartment in
Paris on Avenue Foch.
All in all, Napoleon Chotas had excellent reason to be pleased
with his life. There was only one cloud on his horizon.

His name was Frederick Stavros, and he was the newest member of Tritsis and Tritsis. The other lawyers in the firm were
constantly complaining about Stavros.
'He's second-rate, Napoleon. He doesn't belong in a firm like
this . . .'
'Stavros almost bungled my case. The man's a fool . . .'
'Did you hear what Stavros did yesterday in court? The judge
almost threw him out . . .'
'Damn it, why don't you fire that Stavros fellow? He's a fifth
wheel here. We don't need him, and he's hurting our reputation.'
Napoleon Chotas was only too well aware of that. And he was
almost tempted to blurt out the truth. / can't fire him. But all he
said was, 'Give him a chance. Stavros will work out fine.'
And that was all his partners could get out of him.

A philosopher once said, 'Be careful what you wish for; you
might get it.'
Frederick Stavros, the junior member of Tritsis and Tritsis,
had gotten his wish, and it had made him one of the most
miserable men on earth. He was unable to sleep or eat, and his
weight had dropped alarmingly.
'You must see a doctor, Frederick,' his wife insisted. 'You
look terrible.'
'No, I... it wouldn't do any good.'
He knew that what was wrong with him was something no
doctor could cure. His conscience was killing him.

Frederick Stavros was an intense young man, eager, ambitious,
and idealistic. For years he had worked out of a shabby office in
the poor Monastiraki section of Athens, fighting for indigent

clients, often working without fees. When he had met Napoleon
Chotas, his life changed overnight.
A year earlier, Stavros had defended Larry Douglas, on trial
with Noelle Page for the murder of Douglas' wife, Catherine.
Napoleon Chotas had been hired by the powerful Constantin
Demiris to defend his mistress. From the beginning, Stavros had
been happy to let Chotas take charge of both defenses. He was
in awe of the brilliant lawyer.
'You should see Chotas in action,' he would say to his wife.
'The man is incredible. I wish I could join his firm some day.'
As the trial was nearing its end, it took an unexpected turn. A
smiling Napoleon Chotas assembled Noelle Page, Larry Douglas
and Frederick Stavros in a private chamber.
Chotas said to Stavros, 'I have just had a conference with the
judges. If the defendants are willing to change their pleas to
guilty, the judges have agreed to give each of them a five-year
sentence, four years of which will be suspended. In reality
they will never have to serve more than six months.' He
turned to Larry. 'Because you are an American, Mr Douglas,
you will be deported. You will never be permitted to return to
Greece.'
Noelle Page and Larry Douglas had eagerly agreed to change
their pleas. Fifteen minutes later, as the defendants and their
lawyers stood in front of the bench, the Chief Justice said, 'The
Greek courts have never given the death penalty in a case where
a murder has not been definitely proven to have been committed.

My colleagues and I were, for that reason, frankly
surprised
when the defendants changed their pleas to guilty in
mid-trial
... I pronounce that the sentence on the two defendants,
Noelle Page and Lawrence Douglas, shall be execution by a
firing squad ... to be carried out within ninety days from
this
date.'
And that was the moment when Stavros knew that Napoleon
Chotas had tricked them all. There had never been a
deal. Chotas had been hired by Constantin Demiris not to
defend Noelle Page, but to make sure she was convicted.
This was Demiris' revenge on the woman who had betrayed
him. Stavros had been an unwitting party to a cold-blooded
frame-up.
/ can't let this happen, Stavros thought. /'// go tell the
Chief
Justice what Chotas did and the verdict will be
overturned.
And then Napoleon Chotas had come up to Stavros and said,
'If you're free tomorrow, why don't you come and have
lunch
with me, Frederick? I'd like you to meet my partners . .
.'

Four weeks later, Frederick Stavros was a full partner in
the
prestigious firm of Tritsis and Tritsis, with a large
office and a
generous salary. He had sold his soul to the devil. But he
had
come to the realization that it was a bargain too terrible
to keep.
/ can't go on like this.
He could not shake off his deep feelings of guilt. I'm a
murderer, he thought.
Frederick Stavros agonized over his dilemma, and finally
came
to a decision.
He walked into Napoleon Chotas' office early one morning.
'Leon .'
'My God, man, you look terrible,' Napoleon Chotas said.
'Why don't you take a little vacation, Frederick? It will

do you
good.'
"But Stavros knew that this was not the answer to his problem.
'Leon, I'm very grateful for what you've done for me, but I...
I can't stay here.'
Chotas looked at him in surprise. 'What are you talking about?
You're doing fine.*
'No. I I'm
being torn apart.'
'Torn apart? I don't understand what's bothering you.'
Frederick Stavros stared at him incredulously. 'What. . . what
you and I did to Noelle Page and Larry Douglas. Don't you . . .
don't you feel any guilt?'
Chotas' eyes narrowed. Careful. 'Frederick, sometimes justice
must be served by devious means.' Napoleon Chotas smiled.
'Believe me, we have nothing to reproach ourselves with. They
were guilty.'
'We convicted them. We tricked them. I can't live with it any
longer. I'm sorry. I'm giving you my notice. I'll stay here until
the end of the month.'
'I won't accept your resignation,' Chotas said firmly. 'Why
don't you do as I suggest take
a vacation and . . . ?'
'No. I could never be happy here, knowing what I know. I'm sorry.'
Napoleon Chotas studied him, his eyes hard. 'Do you have
any idea what you're doing? You're throwing away a brilliant
career . . . your life.'
'No. I'm saving my life.'
'So you've definitely made up your mind?'
'Yes. I'm really sorry, Leon. But you don't have to worry, I
won't ever discuss what

happened.' He turned and walked out
of the office.
Napoleon Chotas sat at his desk for a long time, lost in
thought.
Finally, he made a decision. He picked up the telephone
and
dialed a number. 'Would you tell Mr Demiris I must meet
with
him this afternoon? Tell him it's urgent.'

At four o'clock that afternoon, Napoleon Chotas was seated
in
Constantin Demiris' office.
'What's the problem, Leon?' Demiris asked.

'There may not be a problem,' Chotas replied carefully,
'but
I thought I should inform you that Frederick Stavros
carrie in to
see me this morning. He's decided to quit the firm.'
'Stavros? Larry Douglas' lawyer? So?'
'It seems that his conscience is bothering him.'
There was a heavy silence.
'I see.'
'He promised not to discuss what. . . what occurred that
day
in court.'
'Do you believe him?'
'Yes. As a matter of fact, I do, Costa.'
Constantin Demiris smiled. 'Well, then. We have nothing to
worry about, have we?'
Napoleon Chotas rose, relieved. 'I suppose not. I just
thought
you should know.'
'You were right to tell me. Are you free for dinner next
week?'
'Of course.'
till give you a call, and we'll arrange something.'
'Thank you, Costa.'

On Friday, in the late afternoon, the ancient Kapnikarea Church
in downtown Athens was filled with the sound of silence, peaceful
and hushed. In a corner next to the altar, Frederick Stavros knelt
before Father Konstantinou. The priest placed a cloth over Stavros' head.
'I have sinned, Father. I am beyond redemption.'
'Man's great trouble, my son, is that he thinks he is only human. What are your sins?'
'I am a murderer.'
'You have taken lives?'
'Yes, Father. I don't know what to do to atone.'
'God knows what to do. We will ask Him.'
'I let myself be led astray, out of vanity and greed. It happened
a year ago. I was defending a man accused of murder. The trial
was going well. But then Napoleon Chotas . . .'

When Frederick Stavros left the church half an hour later, he felt
like a different man. It was as though a tremendous burden had
been lifted from his shoulders. He felt cleansed by the centuries-old
ritual of confession. He had told the priest everything, and for
the first time since that terrible day, he felt whole again.
/'// start a new life. I'll move to another city and begin fresh.
I'll try to make up somehow for the terrible thing I've done. Thank
you, Father, for giving me another chance.
Darkness had fallen and the center of Ermos Square was
almost deserted. As Frederick Stavros reached the street corner,
the light turned green, and he started to cross. When he reached
the middle of the intersection, a black limousine started down
the hill, its headlights out, hurtling toward him like a

giant,
mindless monster. Stavros stared, frozen. It was too late to jump
out of the way. There was a thundering roar and Stavros felt his
body being smashed and split open. There was an instant of
excruciating pain, and then darkness.

Napoleon Chotas was an early riser. He enjoyed his moments
of solitude before the pressures of the day began to engulf him.
He always breakfasted alone, and read the morning newspapers
with his meal. On this particular morning there were several
items of interest. Premier Themistocles Sophoulis had formed a
new five-party coalition cabinet. / must send him a note of
congratulation. Chinese communist forces were reported to have
reached the north bank of the Yangtze River. Harry Truman
and Alben Barkley were inaugurated as President and Vice-President
of the United States. Napoleon Chotas turned to page
two, and his blood froze. The item that caught his eye
read:

Mr Frederick Stavros, a partner in the prestigious law
firm of Tritsis and Tritsis, was struck and killed last
evening by a hit-and-run driver as he was leaving Kapniarea
Church. Witnesses report that the vehicle was a
black limousine with no license plates. Mr Stavros was a
major figure in the sensational murder trial of Noelle
Page and Larry Douglas. He was the attorney for Larry
Douglas and . . .
Napoleon Chotas stopped reading. He sat in his chair, rigid, his
breakfast forgotten. An accident. Was it an accident? Constantin
Demiris had told him there was nothing to worry about. But too
many people had made the mistake of taking Demiris at face

value.
Chotas reached for the telephone and called Constantin Demiris. A secretary put him through.
'Have you read the morning papers yet?' Chotas asked.
'No, I haven't. Why?'
'Frederick Stavros is dead.'
'What?' It was an exclamation of surprise. 'What are you talking about?'
'He was killed last night by a hit-and-run driver.'
'My God. I'm sorry, Leon. Have they caught the driver?'
'No, not yet.'
'Maybe I can put a little extra pressure on the police. Nobody's
safe these days. By the way, how is Thursday for you for dinner?'
'Fine.'
'It's a date.'
Napoleon Chotas was an expert at reading between the lines. Constantin Demiris was genuinely surprised. He had nothing
to do with Stavros' death, Chotas decided.

The following morning, Napoleon Chotas drove into the private
garage of his office building and parked his car. As he moved
toward the elevator, a young man appeared out of the shadows.
'Do you have a match?'
An alarm in Chotas' mind went off. The man was a stranger, and he had no business being in this garage.
'Certainly.' Without thinking, Chotas slammed his briefcase
into the man's face.
The stranger screamed out in pain. 'You son-of-a-bitch!' He
reached into his pocket and pulled out a gun with a silencer
attached.
'Hey! What's going on here?' a voice called. A uniformed guard was running toward them.

The stranger hesitated for an instant, then ran for the open

door.
The guard reached Chotas' side. 'Are you all right, Mr
Chotas?'
'Ah . . . yes.'^Napoleon Chotas found himself struggling
for
breath. 'I'm fine.'
'What was he trying to do?'
Napoleon Chotas said slowly, 'I'm not sure.'

It could have been a coincidence, Chotas told himself, as
he
sat at his desk. It's possible that the man was simply
trying to
rob me. But you don't use a gun with a silencer to rob
people.
No, he intended to kill me. And Constantin Demiris would
have professed to have been as shocked by the news as
he had pretended to have been about the death of Frederick
Stavros.
/ should have known, Chotas thought. Demiris is not a man
to take risks. He can't afford to leave any loose ends.
Well, Mr
Demiris is in for a surprise.
Napoleon Chotas' secretary's voice came over the intercom:
'Mr Chotas, you're due in court in thirty minutes.'
Today was his summation in a serial murder case, but
Chotas
,*] was too shaken to appear in a courtroom. 'Call the
judge and
ft explain that I'm ill. Have one of the partners cover
for me. No
A'' more calls.'
|) He took a tape recorder from a desk drawer and sat
there,
i1 thinking. Then he began to speak.

Early that afternoon, Napoleon Chotas appeared at the
office of
the State Prosecuting Attorney, Peter Demonides, carrying
a
' manila envelope. The receptionist recognized him at
once.
/t 'Good afternoon, Mr Chotas. May I help you?'
'I want to see Mr Demonides.'

§ 'He's in a meeting. Do you have an appointment?'
a 'No. Would you please tell him I'm here, and that it's urgent.'
| 'Yes, of course.'
Fifteen minutes later, Napoleon Chotas was ushered into the
office of the Prosecuting Attorney.
'Well,' Demonides said. 'Mohammed comes to the mountain.
What can I do for you? Are we going to do a little plea bargaining
this afternoon?'
'No. This is a personal matter, Peter.'
'Sit down, Leon.'
When the two men were seated, Chotas said, 'I want to leave
an envelope with you. It's sealed, and it is to be opened only in
the event of my accidental death.'
Peter Demonides was studying him, curious. 'Are you expecting
something to happen to you?'

'It's a possibility.'
'I see. One of your ungrateful clients?'
'It doesn't matter who. You're the only one I can trust. Can
you put this away in a safe where no one can get to it?'
'Of course.' He leaned forward. 'You look frightened.'
'I am.'
'Would you like my office to give you some protection? I could
send a policeman along with you.'
Chotas tapped the envelope. 'This is the only protection I need.'
'All right. If you're sure.'
'I'm sure.' Chotas rose and held out his hand. 'Efharisto. I
can't tell you how much I appreciate this.'
Peter Demonides smiled. 'Parakalo. You owe me one.'

One hour later, a uniformed messenger appeared at the offices
of the Hellenic Trade Corporation. He approached one of the

secretaries.
'I have a package for Mr Demiris.'
till sign for it.'
'I have orders to deliver it to Mr Demiris personally.'
'I'm sorry, I can't interrupt him. Who is the package from?'
'Napoleon Chotas.'
'You're sure you can't just leave it?'
'Yes, ma'am.'
till see if Mr Demiris will accept it.'

She pushed down an intercom switch. 'Excuse me, Mr Demiris. A messenger has a package for you from Mr Chotas.'

Demiris' voice came over the intercom. 'Bring it in, Irene.'

'He says he has orders to deliver it to you personally.'

There was a pause. 'Come in with him.'

Irene and the messenger entered the office.

'Are you Constantin Demiris?'

'Yes.'

'Will you sign for this, please?'

Demiris signed a slip of paper. The messenger laid the envelope on Demiris' desk. 'Thank you.'

Constantin Demiris watched his secretary and the messenger leave. He studied the envelope for a moment, his face thoughtful, then opened it. There was a tape player inside, with a tape in it.
Curious, he pressed a button and the tape began to play.

Napoleon Chotas' voice came into the office.

'My dear Costa: Everything would have been so much
simpler if you had believed that Frederick Stavros did
not intend to reveal our little secret. I regret even more
that you did not believe that I had no intention of
discussing that unfortunate affair. I have every reason to
think that you were behind the death of poor Stavros,
and that it is now your intention to have me killed. Since
my life is as precious to me as yours is to you, I must
respectfully decline to be your next victim ... I have
taken the precaution of writing out the details of the
part
that you and I played in the trial of Noelle Page and
Larry Douglas, and have placed it in a sealed envelope
and given it to the Prosecuting Attorney to be opened
only in the event of my accidental death. So now it is
very much in your interest, my friend, to see that I stay
alive and well.'

The tape ended.
Constantin Demiris sat there, staring into space.

Ill

When Napoleon Chotas returned to his office that
afternoon,
the fear had left him. Constantin Demiris was a dangerous
man,
but he was far from a fool. He was not going to harm
anyone at
the risk of putting himself in jeopardy. He's made his
move, Chotas thought, and I have checkmated him. He smiled to
himself. / suppose I had better make other plans for
dinner
Thursday.

During the next few days, Napoleon Chotas was busy getting
ready for a new murder trial involving a wife who had
killed her
husband's two mistresses. Chotas rose early each morning
and
worked until late at night, preparing his

cross-examinations. His
instincts told him that against
all odds he
had another winner.
On Wednesday night, he worked at the office until
midnight,
and then drove home. He reached his villa at 1.00 and.
His butler greeted him at the door. 'Would you care for
anything, Mr Chotas? I can prepare some mezedes if you're
hungry, or . . . ?'
'No, thank you. I'm fine. Go on to bed.'
Napoleon Chotas went up to his bedroom. He spent the next
hour going over the trial in his mind, and finally at two
o'clock
he fell asleep. He had dreams.
He was in court, cross-examining a witness, when the
witness
suddenly started to tear off his clothes.
'Why are you doing that?' Chotas demanded.
Tm burning up.'
Chotas looked around the crowded courtroom and saw that
all the spectators were undressing.
He turned to the judge. 'Your Honor, I must object to . .
.'
The judge was taking off his robe. 'It's too hot in here,'
he
said.
It is hot in here. And noisy.
Napoleon Chotas opened his eyes. Flames were licking at
the
bedroom door and smoke was pouring into the room.
Napoleon sat up, instantly wide awake.
The house is on fire. Why didn't the alarm go off?
The door was beginning to buckle from the intense heat.
Chotas hurried to the window, choking on the smoke. He
tried
to force the window open but it was jammed shut. The smoke
was getting thicker, and it was becoming more difficult to
breathe. There was no escape.
Burning emt>ers started dropping from the ceiling. A wall
collapsed and a sheet of flames engulfed him. He screamed.
His
hair and pajamas were on fire. Blindly, he threw himself
at the

closed window and crashed through it, his blazing body hurtling
to the ground sixteen feet below.

Early the following morning, State Prosecutor Peter Demonides
was ushered into Constantin Demiris' study by a maid.
'Kalirnehra, Peter,' Demiris said. 'Thank you for coming.
Have you brought it?'
'Yes, sir.' He handed Demiris the sealed envelope that Napoleon
Chotas had given him. 'I thought you might like to keep this here.'
'That's thoughtful of you, Peter. Would you care for some breakfast?'
'Efharisto. That's very kind of you, Mr Demiris.'
'Costa. Call me Costa. I've had my eye on you for some time,
Peter. I think you have an important future. I'd like to find a
suitable position for you in my organization. Would you be interested?'
Peter Demonides smiled. 'Yes, Costa. I would be very interested.'
'Good. We'll have a nice chat about it over breakfast.'

Chapter 9

London

Catherine spoke to Constantin Demiris at least once a week and
it became a pattern. He kept sending gifts and when she protested
he assured her that they were merely small tokens of his appreciation.
'Evelyn told me how well you handled the Baxter situation.'
Or, 'I heard from Evelyn that your idea is saving us a lot
of money in shipping charges.'
As a matter of fact, Catherine was proud of how well she was
doing. She had found half a dozen things in the office that could

be improved. Her old skills had come back, and she knew that
the efficiency of the office had increased a great deal because of
her.
'I'm very proud of you,' Constantin Demiris told her.
And Catherine felt a glow. He was such a wonderful, caring man.

It's almost time to make my move, Demiris decided. With Stavros
and Chotas safely out of the way, the only person who could
link him with what had happened was Catherine. The danger of
that was slight but, as Napoleon Chotas had found out, Demiris
was not a man to take chances. It's a pity, Demiris thought, that
she has to go. She's so beautiful. But first, the villa in Rafina.
He had bought the villa. He would take Catherine there and
make love to her just as Larry Douglas had made love to Noelle.
After that . . .

From time to time, Catherine was reminded of the past. She
read in the London Times the news of the deaths of Frederick
Stavros and Napoleon Chotas, and the names would have meant
nothing to her except for the mention that they had been the
attorneys for Larry Douglas and Noelle Page.
That night she had the dream again.

One morning, Catherine saw a newspaper item that jolted her:

William Fraser, Assistant to US President Harry Truman,
has arrived in London to work out a new trade
agreement with the British Prime Minister.

She put down the paper, feeling foolishly vulnerable.
William
Fraser. He had been such an important part of her life.
What
would have happened if I hadn't left him?
Catherine sat at her desk, smiling tremulously, staring at
the
item in the newspaper. William Fraser was one of the
dearest
men she had ever known. Just the memory of him made her
feel
warm and loved. And he was here in London. I have to see
him, she thought. According to the newspaper, he was staying
at
Claridge's.
Catherine dialed the number of the hotel, and her fingers
were
trembling. She had a feeling that the past was about to
become
the present. She found herself thrilled at the thought of
seeing
Fraser. What will he say when he hears my voice? When he
sees
me again?
The operator was saying, 'Good morning, Claridge's.'
Catherine took a deep breath. 'Mr William Fraser, please.'
'I'm sorry, madam. Did you say Mr or Mrs William Fraser?'
Catherine felt as though she had been struck. What a fool
I
am. Why didn't I think of that? Of course he could be
married
by now. 'Madam . . .'
'I ... Never mind. Thank you.' She slowly replaced the
receiver. I'm too late. Ifs over. Costa was right. Let the
past remain the past.

air
Loneliness can be a corrosive, eating away at the spirit.
Everyone
needs to share joy and glory and pain. Catherine was
living in a
world full of strangers, watching the happiness of other
couples,
hearing the echo of the laughter of lovers. But she

refused to
feel sorry for herself.
I'm not the only woman in the world who's alone. I'm
alive!
I'm alive!

There was never a shortage of things to do in London. The
London cinemas were filled with American films and
Catherine
enjoyed going to them. She saw The Razor's Edge and Anna
and the King of Siam. Gentleman's Agreement was a
disturbing
film, and Gary Grant was wonderful in The Bachelor and the
Bobby Soxer.
Catherine went to concerts at the Albert Hall and attended
the ballet at Sadler's Wells. She went to
Stratfordupon-Avon
to see Anthony Quayle in The Taming of the Shrew, and to
see
Sir Laurence Olivier in Richard I'll. But it was not as
much fun
going alone.
And then Kirk Reynolds came along.
It was in the office that a tall, attractive man walked up
to
Catherine and said, 'I'm Kirk Reynolds. Where have you
been?'
'I beg your pardon?'
'I've been waiting for you.'
That was how it began.

Kirk Reynolds was an American attorney, working for
Constan-tin
Demiris on international mergers. He was in his forties,
serious-minded, intelligent and attentive.
When she discussed Kirk Reynolds with Evelyn, Catherine
said, 'Do you know what I like about him most? He makes me
feel like a woman. I haven't felt that way in a long
time.'
'I don't know,' Evelyn demurred. 'I'd be careful if I were
you.
Don't rush into anything.'
'I won't/ Catherine promised.

ívtork Reynolds took Catherine on a legal journey through
London.
They went to the Old Bailey, where criminals had been
tried over the centuries, and they wandered through the
main
hall of the law courts, past grave-looking barristers in
wigs
and gowns. They visited the site of Newgate Prison, built
in the eighteenth century. Just in front of where the
prison
had been, the road widened, then unexpectedly narrowed
again.
"That's odd,' Catherine said. 'I wonder why they built the
road
like that?'
'To accommodate the crowds. This is where they used to
hold
public executions.'
Catherine shuddered. It hit too close to home.

One evening, Kirk Reynolds took Catherine to East India
Dock
Road, along the piers.
'Not too long ago, this was a place where policemen walked
in pairs,' Reynolds said. 'It was the hangout for
criminals.'
The area was dark and forbidding, and it still looked
dangerous
to Catherine.
They had dinner at the Prospect of Whitby, one of
England's
oldest pubs, seated on a balcony built over the Thames,
watching
the barges move down the river past the big ships that
were on
their way to sea.
Catherine loved the unusual names of London pubs. Ye Olde
Cheshire Cheese and the Falstaff and the Goat In Boots. On
another night they went to a colorful old public house in
City
Road, called The Eagle.
till bet you used to sing about this place when you were a
child,' Kirk said.
Catherine stared at him. 'Sing about it? I've never even

heard
of this place.'
'Yes, you have. The Eagle is where an old nursery rhyme comes from.'
'What nursery rhyme?'
'Years ago, City Road used to be the heart of the tailoring
trade and toward the end of the week, the tailors would find

themselves short of money, and they'd put their pressing iron a
weasel into
pawn until payday. So someone wrote a nursery rhyme about it:
Up and down the city road
In and out The Eagle
That's the way the money goes
Pop goes the weasel.'
Catherine laughed, 'How in the world did you know that?'
'Lawyers are supposed to know everything. But there's one thing I don't know. Do you ski?'
Tm afraid not. Why . . . ?'
He was suddenly serious. 'I'm going to St Moritz. They have wonderful ski instructors there. Will you come with me,
Catherine?'
The question caught her completely off-guard.
Kirk was waiting for an answer.
'I... I don't know, Kirk.'
'Will you think about it?'
'Yes.' Her body was trembling. She was remembering how exciting it had been to make love with Larry, and she wondered
whether she could ever feel anything like that again. till think
about it.'

1

Catherine decided to introduce Kirk to Wim.
They picked Wim up at his flat and took him to The Ivy for

dinner. During the entire evening, Wim never once looked
directly at Kirk Reynolds. He seemed completely withdrawn.
Kirk looked askance at Catherine. She mouthed, Talk to
him. Kirk nodded and turned to Wim.
'Do you like London, Wim?'
'It's all right.'
'Do you have a favorite city?'
'No.'
'Do you enjoy your job?'
'It's all right.'
Kirk looked at Catherine, shook his head and shrugged.
Catherine mouthed: Please.
Kirk sighed, and turned back to Wim. Tm playing golf
Sunday,
Wim. Do you play?'
Wim said, 'In golf the iron-headed clubs are a driving
iron
midiron mid mashie mashie iron mashie spade mashie mashie
niblick niblick shorter niblick and putter. Wooden-headed
clubs
are the driver brassie spoon and baffy.'
Kirk Reynolds blinked, 'You must be pretty good.'
'He's never played,' Catherine explained. 'Wim just . . .
knows things. He can do anything with mathematics.'
Kirk Reynolds had had enough. He had hoped to spend an
evening alone with Catherine, and she had brought along
this
nuisance.
Kirk forced a smile. 'Really?' He turned to Wim and asked
innocently, 'Do you happen to know the fifty-ninth power
of
two?'
Wim sat there in silence for thirty seconds studying the
tablecloth, and, as Kirk was about to speak, Wim said,
'576,460,752,303,423,488.'
'Jesus!' Kirk said. 'Is that for real?'
'Yeah,' Wim snarled. That's for real.'
Catherine turned to Wim. 'Wim, can you extract the sixth
root
of . . .' She picked a number at random. '24,137,585?'
They both watched Wim as he sat there, his face
expressionless.
Twenty-five seconds later he said, 'Seventeen; the
remainder

is sixteen.'
'I can't believe this,' Kirk exclaimed.
'Believe it,' Catherine told him.
Kirk looked at Wim. 'How did you do that?'
Wim shrugged.
Catherine said, 'Wim can multiply two four-digit numbers in
thirty seconds, and memorize fifty phone numbers in five minutes.
Once he's learned them, he never forgets them.'
Kirk Reynolds was looking at Wim Vandeen in astonishment.
'My office could certainly use someone like you,' he said.
'I've got a job,' Wim snapped.

When Kirk Reynolds dropped Catherine off at the end of the 1
evening, he said, 'You won't forget about St Moritz, will you?'
'No. I won't forget.' Why can't I just say 'yes'?
Constantin Demiris phoned late that night. Catherine was
tempted to tell him about Kirk Reynolds, but at the last moment
she decided not to.

Chapter 10

Athens

Father Konstantinou was perturbed. From the moment he had
seen the newspaper report of Frederick Stavros' hit-and-run
death, he had been haunted by it. The priest had heard thousands
of confessions since he had been ordained, but the dramatic
confession of Frederick Stavros, followed by his death, had left
an indelible impression.
'Hey, what's bothering you?'
Father Konstantinou turned to look at the beautiful young
man lying naked in bed beside him. 'Nothing, love.'
'Don't I make you happy?'
'You know you do, Georgios.'
'Then what's the problem? You're acting like I'm not here,

for Christ's sake.'
'Don't use profanity.'
'I don't like being ignored.'
'I'm sorry, darling. It's just that . . . one of my parishioners
was killed in an automobile accident.'
'We all have to go some time, right?'
'Yes, of course. But this was a very troubled man.'
'You mean he was sick in the head?'
'No. He had a terrible secret, and it was too large a burden
for him to carry.'
'What kind of secret?'
The priest stroked the young man's thigh. 'You know I can't
discuss that. It was told to me in the confessional.'
'I thought we didn't have no secrets from each other.'

'We don't, Georgios, but . . .'
'Gamoto! We either do, or we don't. Anyway, you said the guy's dead. What difference can it make now?'
'None, I suppose, but . . .'
Georgios Lato wrapped his arms around his bed partner, and whispered in his ear, 'I'm curious.'
'You're tickling my ear.'
Lato began stroking Father Konstantinou's body.
'Oh ... don't stop
'Then tell me.'
'Very well. I suppose it can't really do any harm now . . .'

1

Georgios Lato had come up in the world. He was born in the slums of Athens, and when he was twelve years old he became
a male prostitute. In the beginning Lato had walked the streets,
picking up a few dollars for servicing drunks in alleys and tourists
in their hotel rooms. He was gifted with dark good looks and a
strong, firm body.
When he was sixteen, a pimp said to him: 'You're apoulaki,

Georgios. You're giving it away. I can set you up to make a lot
of money.'

And he kept his promise. From that moment on Georgios Lato serviced only important, wealthy men, and he was handsomely
rewarded for it.
When Lato met Nikos Veritos, the personal assistant to the great tycoon, Spyros Lambrou, Lato's life changed.
'I'm in love with you,' Nikos Veritos told the young boy. 'I
want you to stop whoring around. You belong to me now.'
'Sure, Niki. I love you, too.'
Veritos was constantly pampering the boy with gifts. He bought his clothes, paid for a small apartment for him and gave
him spending money. But he fretted about what Lato was doing
when he was away from him.
Veritos solved the problem one day by announcing, 'I've gotten you a job with Spyros Lambrou's company, where I work.'
'So you can keep a fucking eye on me? I won't . . .'
'Of course that's not it, sweetheart. I just like to have you
near me.'
Georgios Lato had protested at first, but he finally gave in.
He found that he actually enjoyed working for the company. He
worked in the mail room, and as a delivery boy, and that gave him the freedom to pick up extra money outside, from appreciative clients like Father Konstantinou.

When Georgios Lato left Father Konstantinou's bed that afternoon,
his mind was in a turmoil. The secret that the priest had confided to him was a stunning piece of news, and Georgios Lato's mind immediately turned to how he could make money out of it. He could have confided it to Nikos Veritos, but he had
bigger plans. I'm going right to the big boss with this, Lato told

himself. That's where the real payoff will be.

The following morning, Lato walked into Spyros Lambrou's reception office.
The secretary behind the desk looked up. 'Oh. The mail's early today, Georgios.'
Georgios Lato shook his head. 'No, ma'am. I have to see Mr Lambrou.'
She smiled. 'Really? What do you want to see him about? Do you have a business proposition for him?' she teased.
Lato said seriously, 'No, it's nothing like that. I just got word
that my mother is dying, and I ... I have to go back home. I
just wanted to thank Mr Lambrou for giving me a job here. It
would only take a minute, but if he's too busy . . .'He started
to turn away.
'Wait. I'm sure he won't mind.'
Ten minutes later, Georgios Lato was standing in Spyros Lambrou's office. He had never been inside before, and the opulence overwhelmed him.
'Well, young man. I'm sorry to hear your mother is dying. Perhaps a small bonus would . . .'
'Thank you, sir. But that's not really why I'm here.'
Lambrou frowned at him. 'I don't understand.'
'Mr Lambrou, I have some important information that I think
might be valuable to you.'
He could see the skepticism on Lambrou's face. 'Oh really? I'm afraid I'm rather busy, so if you'll . . .'
'It's about Constantin Demiris.' The words tumbled out. 'I have a good friend who's a priest. He heard a confession from
a man who was killed right afterward in a car accident, and what
the man told him is about Constantin Demiris Mr Demiris did
an awful thing. Really awful. He could go to prison for it. But
if you're not interested
Spyros Lambrou suddenly found himself very interested. 'Sit

down . . . what's your name?'
'Lato, sir. Georgios Lato.'
'All right, Lato. Suppose you start at the beginning . .
.'

The marriage of Constantin Demiris and Melina had been disintegrating
for years, but there had never been any physical violence until recently.
It had started in the middle of a heated argument over an affair
Constantin Demiris was having with Melina's closest friend.
'You turn every woman into a whore,' she screamed. 'Everything
you touch turns to dirt.'
'Skaseh! Shut your fucking mouth.'
'You can't make me,' Melina said defiantly. 'I'm going to tell
the whole world what a pousti you are. My brother was right.
You're a monster.'
Demiris raised his arm and slapped Melina hard across the face. She ran from the room.
The following week they had another argument, and Constantin
struck her again. Melina packed her bags and took a
plane to Atticos, the private island owned by her brother.
She stayed there for a week, miserable and lonely. She missed
her husband, and she began to make excuses for what he had done.
// was my fault, Melina thought. I shouldn't have antagonized
Costa. And: He didn't mean to hit me. He just lost his temper
and didn't know what he was doing. And: If Costa didn't care so
much about me, he wouldn't have hit me, would he?
But in the end, Melina knew they were simply excuses, because
she could not bear to dissolve her marriage. The following
Sunday she returned home.
Demiris was in the library.

He looked up as Melina entered. 'So you decided to come back.'
'This is my home, Costa. You're my husband, and I love you.
But I want to tell you something. If you ever touch me again, I
will kill you.'
And he looked into her eyes and knew that she meant it.

In an odd way, their marriage seemed to improve after that episode. For a long time after that, Constantin was careful never
to lose his temper with Melina. He continued to have his affairs,
and Melina was too proud to plead with him to stop. One day
he'll get tired of all his whores, Melina thought, and he'll realize
that he needs only me.

On a Saturday evening, Constantin Demiris was putting on a dinner jacket, preparing to go out. Melina came into the room.
'Where are you going?'
'I have an engagement.'
'Have you forgotten? We're having dinner at Spyros' tonight.'
'I haven't forgotten. Something more important has come up.'
Melina stood there watching him, furious. 'And I know what it is your poulakil And you're going to one of your whores to
satisfy it.'
'You should watch your tongue. You're becoming a fishwife, Melina.' Demiris examined himself in the mirror.
'I won't let you do this!' What he was doing to her was bad enough, but to insult her brother deliberately on top of
everything that had gone before was too much. She had to find
a way to hurt him, and there was only one way she knew. 'We
both really should stay home tonight,' Melina said.

'Oh, really?' he asked indifferently. 'And why is that?'
'Don't you know what today is?' she taunted him.
'No.'
'It's the anniversary of the day I killed your son, Costa. I had
an abortion.'
He stood stock-still, and she could see the pupils of his eyes
darken.
'I told the doctors to fix it so I could never have another one
of your children,' she lied.
He completely lost control. 'Skaseh!' And he punched her in
the face, and kept hitting.
Melina screamed and turned and ran down the hall, Constantin
right behind her.
He caught her at the head of the stairs.
till kill you for that,' he roared. As he hit her again, Melina
lost her balance and fell, crashing down the long staircase.
She lay at the bottom, whimpering in pain. 'Oh, God. Help me. I've broken something.'
Demiris stood there, staring down at her, his eyes cold.
till have one of the maids call a doctor. I don't want to be
late for my engagement.'
1

The telephone call came shortly before dinnertime.
'Mr Lambrou? This is Dr Metaxis. Your sister asked me to call you. She's here in my private hospital. I'm afraid she's been
in an accident . . .'
When Spyros Lambrou walked into Melina's hospital room,
he walked over to her bed, and stared down at her, appalled.
Melina had a broken arm, a concussion, and her face was badly
swollen.
Spyros Lambrou said one word, 'Constantin.' His voice was

trembling with rage.
Melina's eyes filled with tears. 'He didn't mean it,' she whispered.
Tm going to destroy him. I swear it on my life.' Spyros Lambrou had never felt such rage.
He could not bear the thought of what Constantin Demiris was doing to Melina. There had to be a way to stop him, but how? He was at a loss. He needed advice. As he had so often in the past, Spyros Lambrou decided to consult Madame
Pins. Perhaps there was some way in which she would be able
to help him.

On the way to see her, Lambrou thought wryly, My friends would laugh at me if they thought I was consulting a psychic. But
the fact was that in the past, Madame Piris had told him some
extraordinary things that had come to pass. She's got to help me
now.

They were seated at a table in a dark corner of the dimly lit cafe.
She seemed older than when he had last seen her. She sat there,
her eyes fastened on him.
'I need some help, Madame Piris,' Lambrou said.
She nodded.
Where to start? 'There was a murder trial about a year and a
half ago. A woman named Catherine Douglas was . . .'
The expression on Madame Piris' face changed. 'No,' she moaned.
Spyros Lambrou stared at her, puzzled. 'She was murdered by . . .'
Madam Piris rose. 'No! The spirits told me she would die!'
Spyros Lambrou was confused. 'She did die,' he said. 'She was killed by . . .'
'She's alive!'
He was completely bewildered. 'She can't be.'
'She was here. She came to see me three months ago. They kept her at the convent.'

He stared at her, stock still. And suddenly all the pieces fell
into place. They kept her at the convent. One of Demiris' favorite
charitable acts was to give money to the convent at loannina,
the town where Catherine Douglas was supposed to have been
murdered. The information Spyros had received from Georgios
Lato fitted in perfectly. Demiris had sent two innocent people
to their deaths for Catherine's murder while she had been very
much alive, hidden away by the nuns.
And Lambrou knew how he was going to destroy Constantin Demiris.
Tony Rizzoli.

Chapter 11

Tony Rizzoli's problems were multiplying. Everything that could
go wrong was going wrong. What had happened was certainly
not his fault, but he knew that the Family would hold him
responsible. They were not tolerant of excuses.
What made it particularly frustrating was that the first part of
the drug operation had gone perfectly. He had smuggled the
shipment into Athens with no problems and had it temporarily
stored at a warehouse. He had bribed an airline steward to
smuggle it out on a flight from Athens to New York. And then,
just twenty-four hours before the flight, the idiot had been
arrested for drunk driving, and the airline had fired him.
Tony Rizzoli had turned to an alternate plan. He had arranged
for a mule in
this case, a seventy-year-old tourist named Sara
Murchison who was visiting her daughter in Athens to take a
suitcase back to New York for him. She had no idea what she

would be carrying.
'It's some souvenirs I promised to send my mother,' Tony Rizzoli explained, 'and because you're nice enough to do this, I
want to pay for your ticket.'
'Oh, that's not necessary,' Sara Murchison protested, 'I'm happy to do it for you. I live not far from your mother's apartment.
I look forward to meeting her.'
'And I'm sure she'd like to meet you, too,' Tony Rizzoli said
glibly. 'The problem is, she's pretty sick. But there will be
someone there to take the suitcase.'
She was perfect for the job a
sweet, all-American grandmother.
The only thing customs would be worrying about her
smuggling would be knitting needles.
Sara Murchison was to leave for New York the following
morning.

'I'll pick you up and drive you to the airport.'
'Why, thank you. What a thoughtful young man you are. Your mother must be very proud of you.'
'Yes. We're very close.' His mother had been dead for ten years.
1

The following morning, as Rizzoli was about to leave his hotel
for the warehouse to pick up the package, his telephone rang.
'Mr Rizzoli?' It was a stranger's voice.
'Yes?'
"This is Dr Patsaka at the Athens Hospital Emergency Ward.
We have a Mrs Sara Murchison here. She tripped and fell last
night and broke her hip. She was very anxious for me to tell you
how sorry . . .'
Tony Rizzoli slammed the phone down. 'Mm/a/' That was
two in a row. Where was he going to find another mule?
Rizzoli knew he had to be careful. There was a rumor that

a
hot-shot American narcotics agent was in Athens working with
the Greek authorities. They were watching all exits from Athens,
and planes and ships were routinely being searched.
As if that weren't enough, there was another problem. One of his gowsters a
thief who was an addict had
informed him
that the police were beginning to search warehouses, looking for
stored drugs and other contraband. The pressure was mounting.
It was time to explain the situation to the Family.
Tony Rizzoli left his hotel and walked down Patission Street
toward the City Telephone Exchange. He was not sure whether
his hotel phone was being bugged, but he did not want to risk
the chance.
Number 85 Patission was a large brown stone building with a
row of pillars in front, and a plaque that read: O.T.E. Rizzoli
walked into the entry and looked around. Two dozen telephone
booths lined the walls, each one numbered. Shelves were filled
with telephone directories from all over the world. In the center
of the room was a desk where four clerks were taking orders for
calls to be placed. People were lined up waiting to be put through.
Tony Rizzoli approached one of the women behind the desk.
'Good morning,' he said.

'Can I help you?'

'I'd like to place an overseas call.'

'There will be a thirty-minute wait, I'm afraid.'

'No problem.'

'Would you give me the country and the number, please?'

Tony Rizzoli hesitated. 'Sure.' He handed a piece of paper to
the woman. Td like to make the call collect.'

'Your name?'

'Brown. Tom Brown.'

'Very well, Mr Brown. I will call you when it comes through.'

Thank you.'

He went over to one of the benches across the room, and sat
down. I could try to hide 'the package in an automobile, and
pay someone to drive it across the border. But that's risky; cars
are searched. Maybe if I could find another . . .

'Mr Brown . . . Mr Tom Brown . . .' The name was repeated
twice before Rizzoli realized it was for him. He rose and hurried
over to the desk.

'Your party is accepting the call. Booth seven, please.'

'Thank you. By the way, could I have the piece of paper back
that I gave you? I'll need the number again.'

'Certainly.' She handed him back the slip.

Tony Rizzoli walked into booth seven and closed the door.

'Hello.'

Tony? Is that you?'

'Yeah. How are you, Pete?'

To tell you the truth, we're a little concerned, Tony. The boys
expected the package to be on its way by now.'

'I've had some problems.'

'Has the package been sent?'

'No. It's still here.'

There was a silence. 'We wouldn't want anything to happen to it, Tony.'

'Nothing's going to happen to it. I just have to find another
way of getting it out of here. There are goddamned narcs all
over the place.'

'We're talking ten million dollars, Tony.'
'I know. Don't worry, I'll figure out something.'
'You do that, Tony. You figure out something.'
The line went dead.

A man in a grey suit watched as Tony Rizzoli moved toward the
exit. He approached the woman behind the desk.
'Signomi. Do you see that man who's just leaving?'
The woman looked up. 'Ochi?'
'I want to know what number he called.'
'I'm sorry. We're not allowed to give out that information.'
The man reached into his back pocket and took out a wallet.
Theie was a gold shield pinned to it. 'Police. I'm Inspector
Tinou.'
Her expression changed. 'Oh. He handed me a slip of paper
with a number on it, and then he took it back.'
'But you made a copy for your records?'
'Oh, yes, we always do that.'

'Would you give me the number, please?'
'Of course.'
She wrote a number on a piece of paper and handed it to the
inspector. He studied it a moment. The country code was 39,
and the exchange was 91. Italy. Palermo.
'Thank you. Do you happen to remember what name the man gave you?'
'Yes. It was Brown. Tom Brown.'

The telephone conversation had made Tony Rizzoli nervous. He
had to go to the bathroom. Damn Pete Lucca! Ahead, on the
corner of Kolonaki Square, Rizzoli saw a sign:
Apohoritirion, WC. Men and women alike were walking through the doorway
to use the same facilities. And the Greeks call themselves
civilized, Rizzoli thought. Disgusting.

There were four men seated around the conference table in the
villa in the mountains above Palermo.
'The stuff should've been sent already, Pete,' one of them
complained. 'What's the problem?'
Tm not sure. The problem may be Tony Rizzoli.'
'We've never had no trouble with Tony before.'
'I know but
sometimes people get greedy. I think maybe we
better send someone to Athens to check things out.'
'Too bad. I always liked Tony.'

At Number 10 Stadiou Street, police headquarters in downtown
Athens, a conference was being held. In the room were Chief
of Police Livreri Dmitri, Inspector Tinou and an American,
Lieutenant Walt Kelly, an agent with the Customs Division of
the US Treasury Department.
'We have word,' Kelly was saying, 'that a big drug deal is
going to take place. The shipment is going out of Athens. Tony
Rizzoli is involved.'

Inspector Tinou sat silent. The Greek police department did
not welcome interference from other countries in their affairs.
Particularly Americans. They are always too-sou, so sure of
themselves.
The chief of police spoke up. 'We are already working on it,
Lieutenant. Tony Rizzoli made a phone call to Palermo a little
while ago. We're tracing the number now. When we have that,
we'll have his source.'
The telephone on his desk rang. Dmitri and Inspector Tinou
looked at each other.
Inspector Tinou picked up the phone. 'Did you get it?' He
listened a moment, his face expressionless, then replaced the
receiver.
'Well?'
'They traced the number.'
'And?'
'The call was made to a public telephone booth in the town
square.'
'Gamotor
'Our Mr Rizzoli is very inch eksipnos.'
Walt Kelly said impatiently, 'I don't speak Greek.'
'Sorry, Lieutenant. It means he's cunning.'
Kelly said, 'I'd like you to increase the surveillance on
him.'
The arrogance of the man. Chief Dmitri turned to Inspector
Tinou. 'We really don't have enough evidence to do more, do
we?'
'No, sir. Only strong suspicions.'
Chief Dmitri turned to Walt Kelly. 'I'm afraid I can't spare
enough men to follow everyone we suspect of being involved in
narcotics.'
'But Rizzoli '
'I assure you, we have our own sources, Mr Kelly. If we get

any further information, we know where to reach you.'
Walt Kelly started at him, frustrated. 'Don't wait too long,'
he said. That shipment will be gone.'

The villa at Raima was ready. The realtor had said to Constantin
Demiris, 'I know you bought it furnished, but if I might suggest
some new furniture . . .'
'No. I want everything exactly as it is.'
Exactly as it was when his faithless Noelle and her lover,
Larry, were there betraying him. He walked through the living
room. Did they make love here in the middle of the floor? In the
den? In the kitchen? Demiris walked into the bedroom. There
was a large bed in the corner. Their bed. Where Douglas had
caressed Noelle's naked body, where he had stolen what belonged
to Demiris. Douglas had paid for his treachery and now
he was going to pay again. Demiris looked at the bed. I'll make
love to Catherine here first, Demiris thought. Then the other
rooms. All of them. He telephoned Catherine from the villa.
'Hello.'
'I've been thinking about you.'

Tony Rizzoli had two unexpected visitors from Sicily. They
walked into his hotel room unannounced, and Rizzoli instantly
smelled trouble. Alfredo Mancuso was big. Gino Laveri was bigger.
Mancuso came straight to the point. 'Pete Lucca sent us.'
Rizzoli tried to sound casual. 'That's great. Welcome to
Athens. What can I do for you?'
'You can cut the bullshit, Rizzoli,' Mancuso said. 'Pete wants
to know what kind of games you're playin'.'
'Games? What are you talking about? I explained to him

that
I'm having a little problem.'
'That's why we're here. To help you solve it.'
'Wait a minute, fellows,' Rizzoli protested. 'I have the package
stashed away, and it's safe. When . . .'
'Pete doesn't want it stashed away. He's got a lot of money
invested in it.' Laveri put his fist against Rizzoli's chest, and
pushed him into a chair. 'Lemme explain it to you, Rizzoli. If
this stuff was out on the streets in New York now like it was
supposed to be, Pete could take the money, launder it, and put
it to work on the street. See what I mean?'
I could probably take these two gorillas, Rizzoli thought. But
he knew he wouldn't be fighting them; he'd be fighting Pete
Lucca.
'Sure, I understand exactly what you're saying,' Rizzoli said
soothingly. 'But it's not as easy as it used to be. The Greek
police are all over the place, and they've got a narc in from
Washington. I have a plan . . .'
'So has Pete,' Laveri interrupted. 'Do you know what his plan
is? He says to tell you if the stuff isn't on its way by next week
you're going to have to come up with the cash yourself.'
'Hey!' Rizzoli protested. 'I don't have that kind of money.
I . . .'
'Pete thought maybe you didn't. So he told us to find other
ways to make you pay.'
Tony Rizzoli took a deep breath. 'Okay. Just tell him every thing's
under control.'
'Sure. Meanwhile we'll stick around. You've got one week.'

Tony Rizzoli made it a point of honor never to drink before noon,
but when the two men left, he opened a bottle of Scotch and took
two long gulps. He felt the warmth of the Scotch course through
him, but it didn't help. Nothing's going to help, he thought. How
could the old man turn on me like this? I've been like a son to him
and he gives me one week to find a way out of this. I need a mule,
fast. The casino, he decided. I'll find a mule there.

At ten o'clock that evening, Rizzoli drove to Loutraki, the
popular casino fifty miles west of Athens. He wandered around
the huge, busy gaming room, watching the action. There were
always plenty of losers, ready to do anything for more gambling
money. The more desperate the person, the easier the prey.
Rizzoli spotted his target almost immediately at a roulette table.
He was a small, birdlike man, grey-haired, in his fifties, who was
constantly stabbing at his forehead with a handkerchief. The
more he lost, the more he perspired.
Rizzoli watched him with interest. He had seen the symptoms
before. This was a classic case of a compulsive gambler losing
more than he could afford.
When the chips in front of the man were gone he said to the
croupier, 'I... I would like to sign for another pile of chips.'
The croupier turned to look at the pit boss.
'Give it to him. That'll be the last.'
Tony Rizzoli wondered how much the pigeon was already
hooked for. He took a seat next to the man, and bought

into the
game. Roulette was a sucker's game, but Rizzoli knew how
to
play the odds, and his pile of chips grew while that of
the man
next to him diminished. The loser was desperately
spreading
chips all over the table, playing the numbers, the colors,
and
taking odd-even bets. He has no idea what the hell he's
doing, Rizzoli thought.
The last of the chips were swept away. The stranger sat
there,
rigid.
He looked up at the croupier hopefully. 'Could I . . . ?'
The croupier shook his head. 'Sorry.'
The man sighed, and rose.
Rizzoli stood up at the same time. 'Too bad,' he said
sympathetically.
'I've had a little luck. Let me buy you a drink.'
The man blinked. His voice quavered. 'That's very kind of
you, sir.'
I've found my ^mule, Rizzoli thought. The man obviously
needed money. He would probably jump at the chance to fly
a
harmless package to New York for a hundred dollars or so
and
a free trip to the United States.

'My name is Tony Rizzoli.'
'Victor Korontzis.'
Rizzoli led Korontzis to the bar. 'What will you have?'
Tm . . . I'm afraid I haven't any money left.'
Tony Rizzoli waved an expansive hand. 'Don't worry about
it.'
"Then I'll have a retsina, thank you.'
Rizzoli turned to the waiter. 'And a Chivas Regal on the
rocks.'
'Are you here as a tourist?' Korontzis asked politely.
'Yes,' Rizzoli replied. Tm on vacation. It's a beautiful
country.'
Korontzis shrugged. 'I suppose so.'
'You don't like it here?'
'Oh, it's beautiful, all right. It's just that it's gotten

so expensive.
I mean, every thing's gone up. Unless you're a millionaire,
it's hard to put food on the table, especially when you have a
wife and four children.' His tone was bitter.
Better and better. 'What do you do, Victor?' Rizzoli asked casually.
Tm a curator at the Athens State Museum.'
'Yeah? What does a curator do?'
A note of pride crept into Korontzis' voice. Tm in charge of
all the antiquities that are dug up in Greece.' He took a sip of
his drink. 'Well, not all of them, of course. We have other
museums. The Acropolis, and the National Archaeological
Museum. But our museum has the most valuable artifacts.'
Tony Rizzoli found himself becoming interested. 'How valuable?'
Victor Korontzis shrugged. 'Most of them are priceless.
There's a law against taking any antiquities out of the country,
naturally. But we have a little shop in the museum that sells
copies.'
Rizzoli's brain was beginning to work furiously. 'Is that so?
How good are the copies?'
'Oh, they're excellent. Only an expert could distinguish between
a facsimile and the real thing.'
'Let me buy you another drink,' Rizzoli said.
'Thank you. That's very kind of you. I'm afraid I'm not in a
position to reciprocate.'
Rizzoli smiled. 'Don't worry about it. As a matter of fact,
there's something you can do for me. I'd like to see your museum.
It sounds fascinating.'
'Oh, it is,' Korontzis assured him enthusiastically. 'It's one of
the most interesting museums in the world. I'd be happy to

show
you around any time. When would you be free?'
'How about tomorrow morning?'
Tony Rizzoli had a feeling that he was onto something more profitable than a mule.

The Athens State Museum is located off the Platia Syntagma, in
the heart of Athens. The museum itself is a beautiful building
built in the style of an ancient temple, with four Ionian columns
in front, a Greek flag flying on top, and four carved figures on
the high roof.
Inside, the large marble halls contain antiquities from various
periods of Greek history, and the rooms are crowded with cases
of relics and artifacts. There are gold cups and gold crowns,
inlaid swords and libation vessels. One case holds four gold
burial masks, and another, fragments of centuries-old statues.
Victor Korontzis was giving Tony Rizzoli a personally conducted
tour. Korontzis stopped in front of a case holding a figurine
of a goddess with a crown of opium poppies. 'That's the poppy
goddess,' he explained in a hushed voice. 'The crown is symbolic
of her function as the bringer of sleep, dreams, revelation and death.'
'How much would that be worth?'
Korontzis laughed. 'If it were for sale? Many millions.'

'Really?'
The little curator was filled with obvious pride as he walked
around, pointing out his priceless treasures. 'This is a head of
kouros, five hundred and thirty bc . . . this is the head

of Athena
with a Corinthian "helmet, circa fourteen fifty bc . . .
and here's
a fabulous piece. A gold mask of an Achaean from the royal
tomb of the Acropolis of Mycenae, from the sixteenth
century
bc. It is believed to be Agamemnon.'
'You don't say?'
He led Tony Rizzoli to another case. In it was an
exquisite
amphora.
'This is one of my favorites,' Korontzis confessed,
beaming.
'I know a parent shouldn't have a favorite child but I
can't help
it. This amphora . . .'
'It looks like a vase to me.' Er
yes.
This vase was discovered in the throne room during
the excavation in Knossos. You can see the fragments
showing
the capture of a bull with a net. In ancient times, of
course, they
captured bulls with nets to avoid the premature spilling
of their
sacred blood, so that . . .'
'How much is it worth?' Rizzoli interrupted.
'I suppose about ten million dollars.'
Tony Rizzoli frowned. 'For thatT
'Indeed! You must remember, it came from the Late Minoan
period, around fifteen hundred bc.'
Tony was looking around at the dozens of glass cases,
crammed
with artifacts. 'Is all this stuff that valuable?'
'Oh my, no. Only the real antiquities. They're
irreplaceable,
of course, and they give us a clue as to how ancient
civilizations
lived. Let me show you something over here.'
Tony followed Korontzis to another chamber. They stopped
in front of a case in the corner.
Victor Korontzis pointed to a vase. 'This is one of our
greatest
treasures. It's one of the earliest examples of the

symbolism of
phonetic signs. The circle with the cross that you see is the figure
of Ka. The crossed circle is one of the very earliest forms
inscribed by human beings to express the cosmos. There are only . . .'
Who gives a shit! 'How much is it worth?' Tony demanded.
Korontzis sighed. 'A king's ransom.'

When Tony Rizzoli left the museum that morning, he was
counting riches beyond his wildest dreams. By a fantastic stroke
of luck he had stumbled upon a gold mine. He had been looking
for a mule, and instead, he had found the key to a treasure-house.
The profits from the heroin deal would have to be split six ways.
Nobody was stupid enough to double-cross the Family; but the
antiques caper was something else again. If he smuggled artifacts
out of Greece, it would be a side deal that belonged only to
him; the mob would not expect anything from it. Rizzoli had
every reason to be elated. Now all I have to do, Rizzoli
thought, is to figure out how to hook the fish. I'll worry about
the mule later.

That evening, Rizzoli took his new-found friend to the Mostrov
Athena, a nightclub where the entertainment was lewd, and
amorous hostesses were available after the show.

'Let's pick up a couple of broads and have some fun,' Rizzoli
suggested.

'I should be getting home to my family,' Korontzis

protested.
'Besides, I'm afraid I couldn't afford anything like
that.'

'Hey, you're my guest. I'm on an expense account. It
doesn't
cost me anything.'

Rizzoli arranged for one of the girls to take Victor
Korontzis
back to her hotel.

'Aren't you coming?' Korontzis asked.

'I have a little business to handle,' Tony told him. 'You
go
ahead. every thing's taken care of.'

The following morning, Tony Rizzoli dropped in at the
museum
again. There was a large crowd of tourists walking through
the
various rooms, marvelling at the ancient treasures.
Korontzis took Rizzoli into his office. He was actually
blush40

ing. 'I. . . I don't know how to thank you for last
night, Tony.
She ... it was wonderful.'
Rizzoli smiled. 'What are friends for, Victor?'
'But there's nothing I can do for you in return.'
'I don't expect* you to,' Rizzoli said earnestly. 'I like
you.
I like your company. By the way, there's a little poker
game
in one of the hotels tonight. I'm going to play. Are you
interested?'
'Thanks. I'd love to, but . . .' He shrugged. 'I don't
think I'd
better.'
'Come on. If it's money that's bothering you, don't worry
about it. I'll stake you.'

Korontzis shook his head. 'You have been too kind already.
If I lost, I couldn't pay you back.'
Tony Rizzoli grinned. 'Who said you're going to lose? It's
a
setup.'
'A set-up? I... I don't understand.'
Rizzoli said quietly, 'A friend of mine named Otto Dalton
is
running the game. There are some big-money American
tourists
in town who love to gamble, and Otto and I are going to
take
them.'
Korontzis was looking at him, wide-eyed. 'Take them? You
mean, you're . . . you're going to cheat?' Korontzis
licked his
lips. 'I... I've never done anything like that.'
Rizzoli nodded sympathetically. 'I understand. If it
bothers
you, you shouldn't do it. I just thought it would be an
easy way
for you to pick up two or three thousand dollars.'
Korontzis' eyes went wide. 'Two or three thousand
dollars?'
'Oh, yes. At least.'
Korontzis licked his lips again. 'I... I... Isn't it
dangerous?'
Tony Rizzoli laughed. 'If it were dangerous, I wouldn't be
doing it, would I? It's a piece of cake. Otto's a mechanic
. . .
a dealer. He can deal a deck from the top, the bottom or
the middle. He's been doing it for years and he's never
been
caught.'
Korontzis sat there, staring at Rizzoli.
'How . . . how much would I need, to get in the game?'
'About five hundred dollars. But I'll tell you what. This
thing

is such a cinch that I'll loan you the five hundred, and
if you lose
it you don't even have to pay it back.'
'That's certainly very generous of you, Tony. Why . . .
why

are you doing this for me?'
'I'll tell you why.' Tony's voice filled with indignation. 'When
I see a decent, hard-working man like you, with a responsible
position like being curator of one of the greatest museums in the
world, and the State doesn't appreciate you enough to give you
a decent salary and
you're struggling to feed your family ell,
to tell you the truth, Victor, it burns me up. How long
since you've gotten a raise?'
'They . . . they don't give raises.'
'Well, there you are. Listen. You have a choice, Victor. You
can let me do you a little favor tonight, so you can pick up a few
thousand dollars and start living like you should. Or you go on
living hand-to-mouth for the rest of your life.'
'I... I don't know, Tony. I shouldn't
Tony Rizzoli rose. 'I understand. I'll probably be coming back
to Athens in a year or two, and maybe we can get together again.
It was a pleasure knowing you, Victor.' Rizzoli started for the
door.
Korontzis made his decision. 'Wait. I ... I would like to go
with you tonight.'
He had taken the bait. 'Hey, that's great,' Tony Rizzoli said.
'It really makes me feel good to be able to help you out.'
Korontzis hesitated. 'Forgive me, but I want to be sure I
understood you correctly. You said that if I lose the five hundred
dollars, I will not have to pay you back?'
'That's right,' Rizzoli said. 'Because you can't lose. The game
is fixed.'
'Where is the game going to be?'
'Room four twenty at the Metropole Hotel. Ten o'clock.

Tell
your wife you're working late.'

Chapter 12

There were four men in the hotel room besides Tony Rizzoli and Victor Korontzis.
'I want you to meet my friend Otto Dalton,' Rizzoli said.
'Victor Korontzis.'
The two men shook hands.
Rizzoli looked at the others quizzically. 'I don't believe I've
met these other gentlemen.'
Otto Dalton made the introductions.
Terry Breslauer from Detroit . . . Marvin Seymour from Houston . . . Sal Prizzi from New York.'
Victor Korontzis nodded to the men, not trusting his voice.
Otto Dalton was in his sixties, thin, grey-haired, affable. Perry
Breslauer was younger, but his face was drawn and pinched.
Marvin Seymour was a thin, mild-looking man. Sal Prizzi was a
huge man, built like an oak tree, with powerful limbs for arms.
He had small, mean eyes, and his face had been badly scarred
with a knife.
Rizzoli had briefed Korontzis before the game. These guys
have a lot of money. They can afford to lose big. Seymour owns
an insurance company. Breslauer has auto dealerships all over
the United States, and Sal Prizzi is head of a big union in New
York.
Otto Dalton was speaking. 'All right, gentlemen. Shall we get
started? The white chips are five dollars, the blue are ten, the
red are twenty-five, and the black ones are fifty. Let's see the

color of your money.'
Korontzis pulled out the five hundred dollars that Tony
Rizzoli
had loaned him. No, he thought, not loaned, given. He
looked
over at Rizzoli and smiled. What a wonderful friend
Rizzoli
is.
The other men were taking out large bank rolls.
Korontzis felt a sudden sense of concern. What if
something
went wrong, and he lost the five hundred dollars? He
shrugged
it off. His friend Tony would take care of it. But if he
won. Korontzis was filled with a sudden feeling of euphoria.
The game began.

It was dealer's choice. The stakes were small at first,
and there
were games of five-card stud, seven-card stud, draw poker,
and
high-low.
In the beginning the wins and losses were spread evenly,
but
slowly the tide began to turn.
It seemed that Victor Korontzis and Tony Rizzoli could do
no wrong. If they had fair cards, the others had worse
cards. If
the others had good hands, Korontzis and Rizzoli had
better
hands.
Victor Korontzis could not believe his luck. At the end of
the
evening he had won almost two thousand dollars. It was
like a
miracle.
'You guys were sure lucky,' Marvin Seymour grumbled.
till say,' Breslauer agreed. 'How about giving us another
chance tomorrow?'
till let you know,' Rizzoli said.

When they had gone, Korontzis exclaimed, 'I can't believe
it.
Two thousand dollars!'

Rizzoli laughed. 'That's chicken feed. I told you. Otto is one
of the slickest mechanics in the business. Those guys are dying
to get another crack at us. Are you interested?'
'You bet.' There was a broad grin on Korontzis' face. 'I think
I just made a joke.'

The following night, Victor Korontzis won three thousand dollars.
'It's fantastic!' he told Rizzoli. 'Don't they suspect anything?'
'Of course not. I'll bet you they ask us to raise the stakes
tomorrow. They think they're going to win their money back.
Are you in?'
'Sure, Tony. I'm in.'

As they were sitting down to play, Sal Prizzi said, 'You know,
we're the big losers so far. How about upping the stakes?'
Tony Rizzoli looked over at Korontzis and winked.
'It's all right with me,' Rizzoli said. 'How about you fellows?'
They all nodded agreement.
Otto Dalton set up piles of chips. "The whites are fifty
dollars, the blues are a hundred, reds five hundred, blacks a
thousand.'
Victor Korontzis looked at Rizzoli uneasily. He had not
planned on the stakes being so high.
Rizzoli nodded reassuringly.
The game began.
Nothing changed. Victor Korontzis' hands were magic. Whatever
cards he held beat the others. Tony Rizzoli was also winning,
but not as much.
'Fucking cards!' Prizzi grumbled. 'Let's change decks.'
Otto Dalton obligingly produced a fresh deck.
Korontzis looked over at Tony Rizzoli and smiled. He knew
that nothing was going to change their luck.

At midnight they had sandwiches sent up. The players took a
fifteen-minute break.
Tony Rizzoli took Korontzis aside. 'I told Otto to chum them
a little,' he whispered.
'I don't understand.'
'Let them win a few hands. If they keep losing all the time,
they'll get discouraged and quit.'
'Oh, I see. That's very smart.'
'When they think they're hot, we'll raise the stakes again and
really nail them big.'
Victor Korontzis was hesitant. 'I've already won so much
money, Tony. Don't you think maybe we should quit while we re

Tony Rizzoli looked him in the eye and said, 'Victor, how
would you like to leave here tonight with fifty thousand dollars
in your pocket?'
1

When the game resumed, Breslauer, Prizzi and Seymour began
to win. Korontzis' hands were still good, but the others were
better.
Otto Dalton is a genius, Korontzis thought. He had been
watching him deal, and had not been able to detect one false
move.
As the play went on, Victor Korontzis kept losing. He was
not concerned. In a few minutes, when they had what was the
word? chummed the others, he and Rizzoli and Dalton would
move in for the kill.
Sal Prizzi was gloating. 'Well,' he said, 'it looks like you fellows
have cooled off.'
Tony Rizzoli shook his head ruefully. 'Yes it sure does, doesn't
it?' He gave Korontzis a knowing look.

'Your luck couldn't go on forever,' Marvin Seymour said.
Perry Breslauer spoke up. 'What do you say we increase the stakes again, and give us a real crack at you?'
Tony Rizzoli pretended to consider it. 'I don't know,' he said
thoughtfully. He turned to Victor Korontzis. 'What do you think,
Victor?'
How would you like to leave here tonight with fifty thousand
dollars in your pocket? I'll be able to buy a house, and a new car.
I can take the family on vacations . . . Korontzis was almost
trembling with excitement. He smiled. 'Why not?'
'All right,' Sal Prizzi said. 'We'll play table stakes. The sky's
the limit.'
They were playing five-card draw. The cards were dealt.
'It's my ante,' Breslauer said. 'Let's open for five thousand
dollars.'
Each player put in his ante.
Victor Korontzis was dealt two queens. He drew three cards,
and one of them was another queen.
Rizzoli looked at his hand and said, 'Up a thousand.'

Marvin Seymour studied his hand. till call, and raise you two
thousand.'
Otto Dalton threw in his cards. 'Too rich for my blood.'
Sal Prizzi said, till call.'
The pot wentvto Marvin Seymour's straight.
In the next hand, Victor Korontzis was dealt an eight, nine,
ten and jack of hearts. One card away from a straight flush!
till call for a thousand dollars,' Dalton said.
till call, and raise you a thousand.'
Sal Prizzi said, 'Let's bump it another thousand.'
It was Korontzis' turn. He was sure that a straight flush would
beat whatever the others were holding. He was only one

card
away.
'I call.' He drew a card, and put it face down, not daring
to
look at it.
Breslauer laid his hand down. 'A pair of fours and a pair
of
tens.'
Prizzi put his hand down. 'Three sevens.'
They turned to look at Victor Korontzis. He took a deep
breath, and picked up his hole card. It was black.
'Busted,' he
said. He threw his hand in.

The pots kept growing larger.
Victor Korontzis' pile of chips had shrunk to almost
nothing.
He looked over at Tony Rizzoli, concerned.
Rizzoli smiled reassuringly, a smile that said, There's
nothing
to worry about.
Rizzoli opened the next pot.
The cards were dealt.
'We'll ante a thousand dollars.'
Perry Breslauer: till raise you a thousand.'
Marvin Seymour: 'And I'll bump you two.'
Sal Prizzi: 'You know something? I think you fellows are
bluffing. Let's raise it five more.'
Victor Korontzis had not looked at his hand yet. When is
the
damn chumming going to stop?
'Victor?'

Korontzis picked up his hand slowly and fanned out the
cards
one by one. An ace, another ace, and a third ace, plus a
king
and a ten. His blood began to race.
'Are you in?'
He smiled to himself. The chumming had stopped. He knew
that he was going to be dealt another king for a full
house. He
threw the ten away and tried to keep his voice casual.
till call.

One card please.'
Otto Dalton said, till take two.' He looked at his cards. 'I
raise a thousand.'
Tony Rizzoli shook his head. Too rich for me.' He threw his
hand in.
Tm in,' Prizzi said, 'and I'll raise five thousand.'
Marvin Seymour threw in his hand. Tm out.'
It was between Victor Korontzis and Sal Prizzi.
'Are you calling?' Prizzi asked. 'It'll cost you five thousand
more.'
Victor Korontzis looked at his pile of chips. Five thousand
was all he had left. But when I win this pot... he thought. He
looked at his hand again. It was unbeatable. He put the pile of
chips in the center of the table and drew a card. It was a five.
But he still had three aces. He laid down his hand. "Three aces.'
Prizzi spread out his hand. 'Four deuces.'
Korontzis sat there, stunned, watching Prizzi rake in the pot.
Somehow he felt as though he had failed his friend Tony.
// / could only have held out until we started to win.
It was Prizzi's deal. 'Seven-card stud,' he announced. 'Let's
put a thousand dollars in the pot.'
The other players threw in their antes.
Victor Korontzis looked over at Tony Rizzoli helplessly. 'I
don't have . . .'
'It's all right/ Rizzoli said. He turned to the others. 'Look,
fellows, Victor didn't have a chance to pick up much cash to
bring tonight, but I can assure you all that he's good for it. Let's
give him credit, and we'll settle up at the end of the evening.'
Prizzi said, 'Hold it. What is this a

fucking credit union? We
don't know Victor Korontzis from Adam's ass. How do we
know
he'll pay up?'
'You have my word on it,' Tony Rizzoli assured him. 'Otto
here will vouch for me.'
Otto Dalton spoke up. 'If Tony says Mr Korontzis is all
right,
then he's all right.'
Sal Prizzi shru|ged. 'Well, I guess it's okay.'
'It's fine with me,' Perry Breslauer said.
Otto Dalton turned to Victor Korontzis. 'How much would
you like?'
'Give him ten thousand,' Tony Rizzoli said.
Korontzis looked over at him in surprise. Ten thousand
dollars
was more money than he made in two years. But Rizzoli must
have known what he was doing.
Victor Korontzis swallowed. 'That. . . that will be fine.'
A pile of chips was put in front of Korontzis.

The cards that night were Victor Korontzis' enemy. As the
stakes
went up, his new pile of chips kept diminishing. Tony
Rizzoli
was losing also.
At 2.00 and. they took a break. Korontzis got Tony Rizzoli
in a corner.
'What's happening?' Korontzis whispered in a panic. 'My
God,
do you know how much money I'm behind?'
'Don't worry, Victor. So am I. I've given Otto the signal.
When it's his turn to deal the game will turn around.
We're going
to hit them big.'
They took their seats again.
'Give my friend another twenty-five thousand dollars,'
Rizzoli
said.
Marvin Seymour frowned. 'Are you sure he wants to keep
playing?'
Rizzoli turned to Victor Korontzis. 'It's up to you.'
Korontzis hesitated. I've given Otto the signal. The game
will

turn around. 'I'm in.'
'Okay.'
Twenty-five thousand dollars' worth of chips was placed in front of Korontzis. He looked at the chips and suddenly felt very
lucky.
Otto Dal ton was dealing. 'All right, gentlemen. The game is
five-card stud. The initial bet is one thousand dollars.'
The players put their chips in the center of the table.
Dalton dealt out five cards to each player. Korontzis did not look at his hand. I'll wait, he thought. It will be good
luck.
'Place your bets.'
Marvin Seymour, seated at Dalton's right, studied his hand for a moment. till fold.' He threw his cards in.
Sal Prizzi was next. till call, and raise a thousand.' He put his
chips in the center of the table.
Tony Rizzoli looked at his hand and shrugged. till fold.' He
threw his cards down.
Perry Breslauer was looking at his hand and grinning. till see
the raise, and I'll raise you five thousand more.'
It would cost Victor Korontzis six thousand dollars to stay in
the game. Slowly he picked up his hand and fanned out the cards. He could not believe what he saw. He was holding a pat
straight flush a
five, six, seven, eight, and nine of hearts. A
perfect hand! So Tony had been right. Thank God! Korontzis tried to hide his excitement. till see the raise, and I'll raise you
five thousand.' This was the hand that was going to make him
rich.
Dalton threw in his hand. 'Not for me. Pass.'
'It's up to me,' Sal Prizzi said. 'I think you're bluffing, pal. I'll
call, and raise you another five.'
Victor Korontzis felt a little thrill of excitement go

through
him. He had been dealt the hand of a lifetime. This would be
the biggest jackpot of the game.
Perry Breslauer was studying his hand. 'Well, I think I'll call,
and raise another five, fellows.'
It was up to Victor Korontzis again. He took a deep
breath. till see you, and raise another five.' He was almost trembling
with excitement. It was all he could do to keep from reaching
out and raking in the pot.
Perry Breslauer spread out his hand, a look of triumph on his
face. 'Three kings.'
I've won! Victor Korontzis thought. 'Not good enough,' he

I
smiled. 'A straight flush.' He put down his cards, and reached
eagerly for the pot.
'Hold it!' Sal Prizzi slowly laid down his hand. 'I beat you with
a royal flush. The ten to the ace of spades.'
Victor Korontzls turned pale. He felt suddenly faint, and his
heart began to palpitate.
'Jesus,' Tony Rizzoli said. 'Two goddamned straight flushes?'
He turned to Korontzis. 'I'm sorry, Victor. I ... I don't know
what to say.'
Otto Dalton said, 'I think that's it for tonight, gentlemen.' He
consulted a slip of paper and turned to Victor Korontzis. 'You
owe sixty-five thousand dollars.'
Victor Korontzis looked over at Tony Rizzoli, stunned. Rizzoli
shrugged helplessly. Korontzis pulled out a handkerchief and
began to swab at his brow.
'How do you want to pay that?' Dalton asked. 'Cash or

check?'
'I don't take checks,' Prizzi said. He looked at Victor
Korontzis. till take the cash.'
'I . . . I . . .' The words would not come out. He found
he
was trembling. 'I... I don't have that
Sal Prizzi's face darkened. 'You whatT he barked.
Tony Rizzoli said quickly, 'Wait a minute. Victor means he
doesn't have it with him. I told you he was good for it.'
'That doesn't put any bread on my table, Rizzoli. I want
to
see his money.'
'You will,' Rizzoli said reassuringly. 'You'll have it in
the next
few days.'
Sal Prizzi jumped to his feet. 'Fuck that. I'm not a
charity. I
want that money by tomorrow.'
'Don't worry. He'll deliver it.'
Victor Korontzis was caught in the middle of a nightmare
and
there was no way out. He sat there, unable to move, barely
aware of the others leaving. Tony and Korontzis were
alone.
Korontzis was in a daze. 'I ... I can never raise that
kind of
money,' he moaned. 'Never!'
Rizzoli put a hand on Korontzis' shoulder. 'I don't know
what
to tell you, Victor. I don't know what went wrong. I guess
I lost
almost as much money as you did tonight.'
Victor Korontzis wiped his eyes. 'But. . . but you can
afford
it, Tony. I... I can't. I'm going to have to explain to
them that
I can't pay them.'

Tony Rizzoli said, 'I'd think about that if I were you,
Victor.
Sal Prizzi is the head of the East Coast Seamen's Union. I
hear
those boys play pretty rough.'

'I can't help it. If I haven't got the money, I haven't got the
money. What can he do to me?'

'Let me explain what he can do to you,' Rizzoli said earnestly.
'He can have his boys shoot off your kneecaps. You'll never walk
again. He can have them throw acid in your eyes. You'll never see
again. And then, when you've had all the pain you can stand, he'll
decide whether to let you live like that, or to kill you.'

Victor Korontzis was staring at him, his face ashen. 'You . . .
you're joking.'

'I wish I was. It's my fault, Victor. I should never have let you
get in a game with a man like Sal Prizzi. He's a killer.'

'Oh, my God. What am I going to do?'

'Do you have any way of raising the money?'

Korontzis began to laugh hysterically. 'Tony ... I can barely
support my family on what I make.'

'Well then, the only thing I can suggest is that you leave town,
Victor. Maybe get out of the country. Go somewhere where
Prizzi can't find you.'

'I can't do that,' Victor Korontzis wailed. 'I have a wife and
four children.' He looked at Tony Rizzoli accusingly. 'You said
it was going to be a set-up, that we couldn't lose. You told
me . . .'

'I know. And I'm really sorry. It always worked before.

The
only thing I can think of is that Prizzi cheated.'

Korontzis' face filled with hope. 'Well then, if he cheated I
don't have to pay him.'

'There's a problem with that, Victor,' Rizzoli said patiently.
'If you accuse him of cheating he'll kill you, and if you don't pay
him he'll kill you.'

'Oh, my God,' Korontzis moaned. 'I'm a dead man.'

'I really feel terrible about this. Are you sure there's no way
you could raise . . . ?'

'It would take me a hundred lifetimes. A thousand lifetimes.
Everything I have is mortgaged. Where would I get . . . ?'

And at that moment, Tony Rizzoli had a sudden inspiration.
'Wait a minute, Victor! Didn't you say that those artifacts in the
museum were worth a lot of money?'

'Yes, but what does that have to do with . . . ?'

'Just let me finish. You said that the copies were as good as
the originals.'

'Of course they're not. Any expert could tell . . .'

'Whoa. Hold it. What if one of those artifacts was missing and
a copy was put in its place? I mean, when I was in the museum
there were a lot of tourists going through. Could they tell the
difference?'

'No, but ... I ... I see what you mean. No, I could never do that.'

Rizzoli said, soothingly, 'I understand, Victor. I just thought
maybe the museum could spare one little artifact. They've got
so many.'

Victor Korontzis shook his head. 'I've been the curator at that
museum for twenty years. I could never think of such a thing.'

'I'm sorry. I shouldn't have even suggested it. The only reason
I thought of it was because it could save your life.' Rizzoli stood
up and stretched. 'Well, it's getting late. I guess your wife will
be wondering where you are.'

Victor Korontzis was staring at him. 'It could save my life?
How?'

'It's simple. If you took one of those antiques . . '

'Antiquities.'

'. . . antiquities . . . and gave it to me, I could get it out of
the country and sell it for you, and give Prizzi the money you
owe him. I think I could persuade him to hold off that long. And
you'd be off the hook. I don't have to tell you that I'd be taking
a big risk for you, because if I got caught I'd be in a lot of
trouble. But I'm offering to do it because I feel I owe you one.
It's my fault you got into this mess.'

'You're a good friend,' Victor Korontzis said. 'But I can't
blame you. I didn't have to get in that game. You were trying
to do me a favor.'

'I know. I just wish it had turned out differently. Well,
let's get some sleep. I'll talk to you tomorrow. Good night,
Victor.'
'Good night, Tony.'
1

The call came in to the museum early the following morning.
'Korontzis?'
'Yes?'
ThisisSalPrizzi.'
'Good morning, Mr Prizzi.'
'I'm callin' about that little matter of sixty-five thousand dollars.
What time can I pick it up?'
Victor Korontzis began to perspire heavily. 'I... I don't have
the money right now, Mr Prizzi.'
There was an ominous silence at the other end of the phone.
'What the hell kind of game are you playing with me?'
'Believe me, I'm not playing any games. I . . .'
'Then I want my fucking money. Is that clear?'
'Yes, sir.'
'What time does your museum close?'
'Six . . . six o'clock.'
till be there. Have the money for me, or I'll break your face
in. And after that, I'm really going to hurt you.'
The line went dead.
Victor Korontzis sat there in a panic. He wanted to hide. But
where? He was engulfed by a feeling of total desperation, caught
in a vortex of 'ifs': if only I hadn't gone to the casino

that night;
if only I had never met Tony Rizzoli; if only I had kept my
promise to my wife never to gamble again. He shook his head to
clear it. / have to do something now.
And at that moment, Tony Rizzoli walked into his office.
'Good morning, Victor.'

It was six thirty. The staff had gone home, and the museum had
been closed for half an hour. Victor Korontzis and Tony Rizzoli
were watching the front door.

Korontzis was getting increasingly nervous. 'What if he says
no? What if he wants his money tonight?'
till handle him,' Tony Rizzoli said. 'Just let me do the talking.'
'What if he doesn't show up? What if he just . . . you know
. . . sends someone to kill me? Do you think he would do that?'
'Not as long as he has a chance of getting his money,' Rizzoli
said confidently.
At seven o'clock, Sal Prizzi finally appeared.
Korontzis hurried over to the door and opened it. 'Good
evening,' he said.
Prizzi looked at Rizzoli. 'What the fuck are you doin' here?'
He turned back to Victor Korontzis. 'This is just between us.'
'Take it easy,' Rizzoli said. 'I'm here to help.'
'I don't need your help.' Prizzi turned to Korontzis. 'Where's
my money?'
'I ... I don't have it. But . . .'
Prizzi grabbed him by the throat. 'Listen, you little prick.
You'll give me that money tonight, or I'm going to feed you to
the fish. Do you understand?'

Tony Rizzoli said, 'Hey, cool down. You're going to get your
money.'
Prizzi turned on him. 'I told you to stay out of this. It's none
of your business.'
'I'm making it my business. I'm Victor's friend. Victor doesn't
have the cash right now, but he has a way to get it for you.'
'Has he got the money, or hasn't he?'
'He has, and he hasn't,' Rizzoli said.
'What the hell kind of answer is that?'
Tony Rizzoli's arm swept around the room. 'The money's there.'
Sal Prizzi scanned the room. 'Where?'
'In those cases. They're full of antiques . . .'
'Antiquities,' Korontzis said automatically.
'. . . that are worth a fortune. I'm talking about millions.'
'Yeah?' Prizzi turned to look at the cases. 'What good are they going to do me if they're locked away in a museum? I want
cash.'
'You're going to get cash,' Rizzoli said soothingly. 'Twice what

. . . antiquities . . . and arrange to sell it. As soon as he gets the
money, he'll pay you.'
Sal Prizzi shook his head. 'I don't like it. I don't know nothing
about this antique stuff.'
'You don't have to. Victor's one of the world's greatest experts.' Tony Rizzoli walked over to one of the cases and pointed to a marble head. 'What would you say that's worth,
Victor?'
Victor Korontzis swallowed. 'That's the goddess Hygea, fourteenth
century bc. Any collector would gladly pay two or three million dollars for it.'
Rizzoli turned to Sal Prizzi. 'There you are. See what I mean?'

Prizzi frowned. 'I don't know. How long would I have to wait?'
'You'll have double your money inside a month.'
Prizzi thought a moment, then nodded. 'Okay, but if I have to wait a month, I want more say
an extra couple of hundred
grand.'
Tony Rizzoli looked over at Victor Korontzis.
Korontzis was nodding his head eagerly.
'Okay,' Rizzoli said. 'You have a deal.'
Sal Prizzi walked over to the little curator. 'I'm giving you
thirty days. If I don't have my money by then, you're dog meat.
Do I make myself clear?'
Korontzis swallowed. 'Yes, sir.'
'Remember . . . thirty days.'
He gave Tony Rizzoli a long hard look. 'I don't like you.'
They watched as Sal Prizzi turned and walked out the door.
Korontzis sank into a chair, wiping his brow.
'Oh, my God,' he said. 'I thought he was going to kill me. Do
you think we can get him his money in thirty days?'
'Sure,' Tony Rizzoli promised. 'All you have to do is take one
of those things out of the case and put a copy in its place.'
'How will you get it out of the country? You'll go to prison if
they catch you.'
Breslauer and Marvin Seymour were having drinks in Dalton's
hotel suite.
'Smooth as silk,' Rizzoli boasted. The bastard pissed his pants.'
Sal Prizzi grinned. 'I scared him, huh?'
'You scared me,' Rizzoli said. 'You should be a fucking actor.'
'What's the deal now?' Marvin Seymour asked.
Rizzoli replied, "The deal is, he gives me one of those antiques.
I'll find a way to smuggle it out of the country and sell it. Then
I'll give you each your cut.'

'Beautiful,' Perry Breslauer said. 'I love it.'
It's like having a gold mine, Rizzoli thought. Once Korontzis
goes along with this, he's hooked. There's no way he can ever
back out. I'm going to make him clean out the whole goddamned
museum.
Marvin Seymour asked, 'How are you going to get the stuff out of the country?'

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He had to. And fast. Alfredo Mancuso and Gino Laveri were waiting.

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Chapter 13

1

At police headquarters on Stadiou Street, an emergency meeting
had been called. In the conference room were Chief of Police
Dmitri, Inspector Tinou, Inspector Nicolino, Walt Kelly, the US
Treasury agent, and half a dozen detectives. The atmosphere
was far different than it had been at the previous meeting.
Inspector Nicolino was saying, 'We now have reason to believe
your information was correct, Mr Kelly. Our sources tell us that
Tony Rizzoli is trying to find a way to smuggle a very large
shipment of heroin out of Athens. We have already begun a
search of possible warehouses where he might have stored it.'
'Did you put a tail on Rizzoli?'
'We increased the number of men this morning,' Chief Dmitri
said.
Walt Kelly sighed. 'I hope to God it isn't too late.'

Inspector Nicolino assigned two teams of detectives to handle
the surveillance on Tony Rizzoli, but he underestimated his
subject. By afternoon Rizzoli became aware that he had
company. Whenever he left the little hotel he was staying at, he
was followed, and when he returned, someone was always casually
loitering in the background. They were real professionals.
Rizzoli liked that. It was a sign of respect for him.
He now not only had to find a way to get the heroin out of
Athens, but he was going to have a priceless antiquity to smuggle
out. Alfredo Mancuso and Gino Laveri are on my back, and the
police are all over me like a wet blanket. I've got to make a contact

fast. The only name that immediately came to mind was Ivo Bruggi, a small-time ship owner in Rome. Rizzoli had done business with Bruggi in the past. It was a long-shot, but it was
better than nothing.

Rizzoli was certain that the telephone in his hotel room was
tapped. I've got to have a set-up where I can receive calls at the
hotel. He sat there thinking for a long time. Finally, he rose and
walked over to the room across the hall and knocked at the door.
It was opened by*an elderly, sour-faced man.
'Yeah?'
Rizzoli turned on the charm. 'Excuse me,' he said. 'I'm sorry
to bother you. I'm your neighbor across the hall. I wonder if I
could come in and talk to you for a minute?'
The man studied him suspiciously. 'Lemme see you open the door to your room.'
Tony Rizzoli smiled. 'Certainly.' He stepped across the hall,
took out his key, and opened the door.
The man nodded. 'All right. Come in.'
f| Tony Rizzoli closed his door and went into the room across
the hall.
'What do you want?'
'It's really a personal problem, and I hate to trouble you, but
. . . Well, the truth is, I'm in the middle of getting a divorce,
and my wife is having me followed.' He shook his head in disgust.
'She even had the phone in my room bugged.'
'Women!' his neighbor growled. 'God damn them. I divorced my wife last year. I should've done it ten years ago.'
'Really? Anyway, what I was wondering was if you would be good enough to let me give a couple of friends your room number
so they can telephone me here. I promise you there won't

be
many calls.'
The man started to shake his head. 'I can't be bother '
Rizzoli pulled a hundred-dollar bill from his pocket.
'This is
for your trouble.'
The man licked his lips. 'Oh. Well, sure,' he said. 'I
guess it'll
be all right. I'm glad to do a fellow sufferer a favor.'
'That's certainly kind of you. Whenever there's a call for
me,
just knock at my door. I'll be here most of the time.'
'Right.'

Early the following morning, Rizzoli walked to a public
pay
station to telephone Ivo Bruggi. He dialed the operator
and put
in a call for Rome.
'Signor Bruggi, per piacere.'
'Non c'ë in casa.'
'Quando arriverá'?'
'Non lo so.'
'Gli dica, di chiamare il Signor Rizzoli.'
Rizzoli left the telephone number of the switchboard at
his
hotel and the room number of his neighbor. He went back to
his room. He hated the room. Someone had told him that the
Greek word for hotel was xenodochion, meaning a container
for
strangers. It's more like a fucking prison, Rizzoli
thought. The
furniture was ugly: an old green sofa, two battered end
tables
with lamps, a little writing desk with a lamp and desk
chair, and
a bed designed by Torquemada.
For the next two days Tony Rizzoli stayed in his room,
waiting
for a knock on the door, sending a bellboy out for food.
No call. Where the fuck is Ivo Bruggi?

The surveillance team was reporting to Inspector Nicolino
and

Walt Kelly. 'Rizzoli's holed up in his hotel. He hasn't budged
for forty-eight hours.'
'Are you sure he's in there?'
'Yes, sir. The maids see him in the morning and night when they make up his room.'
'What about phone calls?'
'Not a one. What do you want us to do?'
'Sit tight. He'll make his move sooner or later. And make sure
the tap on his phone is working.'

The following day, the telephone in Rizzoli's room rang. Shit! Bruggi shouldn't have been calling him in this room. He had left
a message for the idiot to call him in his neighbor's room. He
would have to be careful. Rizzoli picked up the telephone. 'Yes?'

A voice said, 'Is this Tony Rizzoli?'
It was not Ivo Bruggi's voice. 'Who is this?'
'You came to see me at my office the other day with a business
proposition, Mr Rizzoli. I turned you down. I think perhaps you
and I should discuss it again.'
Tony Rizzoli felt a sudden thrill of exaltation. Spyros Lam-brou!
So the bastard has come around. He could not believe his good luck. All my problems are solved. I can ship the heroin and
\\ the antique at the same time.
'Yeah. Sure. I'll be happy to discuss it. When would you like
to meet?'
'Can you make it this afternoon?'
So, he's hungry to make a deal. The fucking rich are all the
same. They never have enough. 'Fine. Where?'
'Why don't you come to my office?'
till be there.' Tony Rizzoli replaced the receiver, elated.
In the lobby of the hotel, a frustrated detective was

reporting
to headquarters. 'Rizzoli just received a telephone call. He's
going to meet someone at his office, but the man didn't give a
name and we can't trace the call.'
'All right. Cover him when he leaves the hotel. Let me know
where he goes.'
'Yes, sir.'
Ten minutes later, Tony Rizzoli was crawling out of a basement window leading to an alley behind the hotel. He changed taxis
twice to make sure he was not being followed, and headed for
Spyros Lambrou's office.

From the day Spyros Lambrou had visited Melina in the hospital,
he had vowed to avenge his sister. But he had been unable to
think of a punishment terrible enough for Constantin Demiris.
Then, with the visit from Georgios Lato, and the startling news
that Madame Piris had given him, a weapon had been put into
his hands that was going to destroy his brother-in-law.
His secretary announced: 'A Mr Anthony Rizzoli is here to
see you, Mr Lambrou. He has no appointment and I told him
you couldn't . . .'

'Send him in.'
'Yes, sir.'
Spyros Lambrou watched as Rizzoli walked through the doorway,
smiling and confident.
'Thank you for coming, Mr Rizzoli.'
Tony Rizzoli grinned. 'My pleasure. So, you've decided you
and I are going to do business together, huh?'
'No.'
Tony Rizzoli's smile faded. 'What did you say?'
'I said "No." I have no intention of doing business with
you.'

Tony Rizzoli stared at him, baffled. 'Then what the hell did
you call me for? You said you had a proposition for me and . . .'
T do. How would you like to have the use of Constantin Demiris' fleet of ships?'
Tony Rizzoli sank into a chair. 'Constantin Demiris? What are you talking about? He'd never . . .'
'Yes, he would. I can promise you that Mr Demiris will be happy to give you anything you want.'
'Why? What does he get out of it?'
'Nothing.'
That doesn't make sense. Why would Demiris make a deal like that?'
'I'm glad you asked.' Lambrou pressed down the intercom button: 'Bring in some coffee, please.' He looked at Tony Rizzoli. 'How do you like yours?'
'Er black,
no sugar.'
'Black, no sugar, for Mr Rizzoli.'
When the coffee had been served, and his secretary had left
the office, Spyros Lambrou said: 'I'm going to tell you a little
story, Mr Rizzoli.'
Tony Rizzoli was watching him, wary. 'Shoot.'
'Constantin Demiris is married to my sister. A number of years ago he took on a mistress. Her name was Noelle Page.'
The actress, right?'
'Yes. She cheated on him with a man named Larry Douglas. Noelle and Douglas went on trial for murdering Douglas' wife
because she wouldn't give him a divorce. Constantin Demiris
hired a lawyer named Napoleon Chotas to defend Noelle.'
'I remember reading something about the trial,'
'There are some things that were not in the newspapers. You see, my dear brother-in-law had no intention of saving his unfaithful mistress's life. He wanted vengeance. He hired
Napoleon Chotas to see that Noelle was convicted. Near the end
of the trial, Napoleon Chotas told the defendants he had

made
a deal with the judges if they pleaded guilty. It was a lie. They
pleaded guilty. And they were executed.'
'Maybe this Chotas really thought that
'Let me finish, please. The body of Catherine Douglas was never found. The reason it was never found, Mr Rizzoli, is because she is alive. Constantin Demiris had her hidden away.'
Tony Rizzoli was staring at him. 'Wait a minute. Demiris knew she was alive, and he let his mistress and her boyfriend go to
their deaths for killing her?'
'Exactly. I'm not sure precisely what the law is, but I am sure
that if the facts were to come out, my brother-in-law would
spend a good deal of time in prison. At the very least, he would
certainly be ruined.'
Tony Rizzoli sat there, thinking about what he had just heard.
There was something puzzling him. 'Mr Lambrou, why are you telling me this?'
Spyros Lambrou's lips moved in a beatific smile. 'Because I
owe my brother-in-law a favor. I want you to go see him. I have
a feeling he'll be very happy to let you use his ships.'

Chapter 14

1

There were storms raging in him over which he had no control,
a cold center deep within him with no warm memories to dissolve
it. They had begun a year ago with his act of revenge against
Noelle. He had thought that that had ended it, that the past
was buried. It had never occurred to him that there might

be repercussions until, unexpectedly, Catherine Alexander had
come back into his life. That had necessitated the removal of
Frederick Stavros and Napoleon Chotas. They had played a
deadly game against him, and he had won. But what surprised
Constantin Demiris was how much he had enjoyed the risk, the
cutting edge of excitement. Business was fascinating, but it paled
compared to the game of life and death. I'm a murderer, Demiris
thought. No not
a murderer. An executioner. And instead of
being appalled by it, he found it exhilarating.
Constantin Demiris received a weekly report on Catherine
Alexander's activities. So far, everything was working out perfectly.
Her social activities were confined to the people she
worked with. According to Evelyn, Catherine occasionally went
out with Kirk Reynolds. But since Reynolds worked for Demiris,
that presented no problem. The poor girl must be
desperate, Demiris thought. Reynolds was boring. He could talk about
nothing but the law. But that was all to the good. The more
desperate Catherine was for companionship, the easier it would
be for him. / owe Reynolds a vote of thanks.

Catherine was seeing Kirk Reynolds regularly, and she found
herself drawn to him more and more. He was not handsome,
but he was certainly attractive. / learned my lesson about handsome
with Larry, Catherine thought wryly. The old expression
is true: Handsome is as handsome does. Kirk Reynolds was
thoughtful and reliable. He's someone I can count on, Catherine
thought. / don't feel any great burning spark, but I probably

never will again. Larry took care of that. I'm mature
enough now
to settle for a mah I respect, who respects me as a
companion,
someone with whom I can share a nice, sane life without
being
worried about being thrown off mountain tops, or being
buried
in dark caves.
They went to the theatre to see The Lady's Not For Burning
by Christopher Fry, and, on another evening, September Tide,
with Gertrude Lawrence. They went to nightclubs. The
orchestras
all seemed to be playing The Third Man theme and 'La Vie
En Rose'.

'I'm going to St Moritz next week,' Kirk Reynolds told
Catherine.
'Have you thought about it?'
Catherine had given it a great deal of thought. She was
sure
that Kirk Reynolds was in love with her. And I love him,
Catherine thought. But loving and being in love are two
different
» things, aren't they? Or am I just being a dumb romantic?
What *' am I looking for another
Larry? someone
who'll sweep me
off my feet, fall in love with another woman, and try to
kill me?
Kirk Reynolds would make a wonderful husband. Why am I
hesitating?

That night Catherine and Kirk dined at the Mirabelle, and
when
they were having dessert, Kirk said, 'Catherine, in case
you don't
know, I'm in love with you. I want to marry you.'
She felt a sudden panic. 'Kirk . . .' And she was not sure
what
she was going to say. My next words, Catherine thought,
are
going to change my life. It would be so simple to say yes.
What's

holding me back? Is it the fear of the past? Am I going to live my
whole life being afraid? I can't let that happen.
'Cathy . . .'
'Kirk Why
don't we go to St Moritz together?'
Kirk's face lit up. 'Does that mean . . . ?'
'We'll see. Once you see me ski you probably won't want to
marry me.'
Kirk laughed. 'Nothing in the world could keep me from
wanting to marry you. You've made me one very happy fellow.
We'll go up on November fifth Guy
Fawkes Day.'
'What is Guy Fawkes Day?'
'It's a fascinating story. King James had a strict anti-Catholic
policy, so a group of prominent Roman Catholics plotted to
overthrow the government. A soldier named Guy Fawkes was
brought over from Spain to lead the plot. He arranged for a ton
of gunpowder, in thirty-six barrels, to be hidden in the basement
of the House of Lords. But on the morning that they were to
blow up the House of Lords, one of the conspirators told on
them and they were all caught. Guy Fawkes was tortured, but
he wouldn't talk. All the men were executed. Now, every year
in England, the day of the discovery of the plot is celebrated by
bonfires and fireworks, and small boys make effigies of "Guys".'
Catherine shook her head. 'That's a pretty grim holiday.'
He smiled at her, and said quietly, 'I promise you that ours
won't be grim.'

The night before they were to leave, Catherine washed her hair,
packed and unpacked twice and felt sick with excitement.

She
had only known two men carnally in her life, William Fraser and
her husband. Do they still use words like 'carnally'? Catherine
wondered. My God, I hope I remember how. They say it's like
riding a bicycle; once you do it, you never forget. Maybe he's
going to be disappointed in me in bed. Maybe I'm going to be
disappointed in me in bed. Maybe I should just stop worrying
about it and go to sleep.

'Mr Demiris?'
'Yes.'
'Catherine Alexander left this morning for St Moritz.'
There was a silence. 'St Moritz?'
'Yes, sir.'
'Did she go alone?'
'No, sir. She went with Kirk Reynolds.'
This time the silence was longer. 'Thank you, Evelyn.'
Kirk Reynolds! It was impossible. What could she see in him?
/ waited too long: I should have moved more quickly. I'll have
to do something about this. I can't let her His
secretary buzzed.
'Mr Demiris, there's a Mr Anthony Rizzoli here to see you.
He-does not have an appointment and . . .'
'Then why are you bothering me?' Demiris asked. He snapped
down the intercom.
It buzzed again. 'I'm sorry to disturb you. Mr Rizzoli says he
has a message for you from Mr Lambrou. He says it's very
important.'
A message? Strange. Why wouldn't his brother-in-law deliver
his own message? 'Send him in.'
'Yes, sir.'
Tony Rizzoli was ushered into Constantin Demiris' office. He
looked around the office appreciatively. It was even more

lavish
than the offices of Spyros Lambrou. 'Nice of you to see me, Mr
Demiris.'
'You have two minutes.'
'Spyros sent me. He thought you and I should have a talk.'
'Really? And what do we have to talk about?'
'Do you mind if I sit down?'
'I don't think you'll be staying that long.'
Tony Rizzoli settled himself in a chair facing Demiris. 'I have
a manufacturing plant, Mr Demiris. I ship things to various parts
of the world.'
'I see. And you want to charter one of my ships.'
'Exactly.'
'Why did Spyros send you to me? Why don't you charter one
of his ships? He happens to have two of them idle at the
moment.'
Tony Rizzoli shrugged. 'I guess he doesn't like what I ship.'
'I don't understand. What is it you ship?'
'Drugs,' Tony Rizzoli said delicately. 'Heroin.'
Constantin Demiris was staring at him in disbelief. 'And you
expect me to . . . ? Get out of here, before I call the police.'
Rizzoli nodded toward the phone. 'Go right ahead.'

He watched Demiris reach for the phone. Td like to speak to
them, too. I'd like to tell them all about that trial of Noelle Page
and Larry Douglas.'
Constantin Demiris froze. 'What are you talking about?'
'I'm talking about two people executed for the murder of a
woman who's still alive.'
Constantin Demiris' face had gone white.
'Do you think maybe the police would be interested in that
story, Mr Demiris? If they aren't, maybe the press would be,
huh? I can see the headlines now, can't you? Can I call you
Costa? Spyros told me all your friends call you Costa, and

I think
you and I are going to be good friends. Do you know why?
Because good friends don't rat on each other. We'll keep
that
little stunt you pulled our secret, shall we?'
Constantin Demiris was sitting rigid in his chair. When he
spoke his voice was hoarse. 'What is it you want?'
'I told you. I want to charter one of your ships and,
you and
I being such good friends, I don't think you would want to
charge
me for the charter, would you? Let's say it's a favor
traded for
a favor.'
Demiris took a deep breath. 'I can't let you do this. If
it ever
got out that I allowed drugs to be smuggled on one of my
ships,
I could lose my whole fleet.'
'But it's not going to get out, is it? In my business, I
don't
advertise. We're going to do this very quietly.'
Constantin Demiris' expression hardened. 'You're making a
big mistake. You can't blackmail me. Do you know who I
am?'
'Yeah. You're my new partner. You and I are going to be
doing business together for a long time, Costa baby,
because, if
you say no, I go right to the police and the newspapers
and spill
the whole story. And there goes your reputation and your
fucking
empire, right down the drain.'
There was a long, painful silence.
'How how
did my brother-in-law find out?'
Rizzoli grinned. 'That's not important. What's important
is
that I've got you by the balls. If I squeeze, you're a
eunuch.
You'll be singing soprano for the rest of your life, and
you'll be
singing it in a prison cell.' Tony Rizzoli looked at his
watch. 'My

goodness, my two minutes are up.' He rose to his feet. Tm
giving you sixty seconds to decide whether I walk out of
here as
your partner or
I just walk out.'
Constantin Demiris suddenly looked ten years older. His
face
was drained of "color. He had no illusions about what
would
happen if the true story of the trial came out. The press
would
eat him alive. He would be portrayed as a monster, a
murderer.
They might even open an investigation into the deaths of
Stavros
and Chotas.
'Your sixty seconds are up.'
Constantin Demiris nodded slowly. 'All right,' he
whispered,
|< 'all right.'
Tony Rizzoli beamed down at him. 'You're smart.'
Constantin Demiris slowly rose to his feet. till let you
get
away with it this once,' he said. 'I don't want to know
how you
do it, or when. I'll put one of your men aboard one of my
ships.
That's as far as I'll go.'
'It's a deal,' Tony Rizzoli said. He thought, Maybe you're
not
so smart. You smuggle one load of heroin and you're
hooked,
Costa baby. There's no way I will ever let you go. Aloud,
he
repeated, 'Sure, it's a deal.'

On the way back to the hotel, Tony Rizzoli was exultant.
Jackpot.
The narcs would never dream of touching Constantin
Demiris'
fleet. Christ, from now on I can load up every ship of his
that
sails out of here. The money will roll in. Horse and
antiques orry,

Victor., he laughed aloud antiquities.
Rizzoli went to a public telephone booth on Stadiou Avenue
and made two calls. The first was to Pete Lucca in
Palermo.
'You can get your two gorillas out of here, Pete, and put
them
back in the zoo where they belong. The stuffs ready to
move.
It's going by ship.'
'Are you sure the package is safe?'
Rizzoli laughed. 'It's safer than the Bank of England.
I'll
tell you about it when I see you. And I have more good
news.
From now on we're going to be able to make a shipment
every
week.'
"That's wonderful, Tony. I always knew I could count on
you.' The hell you did, you bastard.

The second call was to Spyros Lambrou. 'It went fine. Your
brother-in-law and I are going into business together.'
'Congratulations. I'm delighted to hear it, Mr Rizzoli.'
When Spyros Lambrou replaced the receiver, he smiled. The
narcotics squad will be, too.

Constantin Demiris stayed in his office past midnight,
sitting at
his desk, contemplating his new problem. He had avenged
himself
against Noelle Page, and now she was returning from the
grave to haunt him. He reached inside a desk drawer and
took
out a framed photograph of Noelle. Hello, bitch. God, she
was
beautiful! So you think you're going to destroy me. Well,
we'll
see. We'll see.

Chapter 15
«--»

I

St Moritz was an enchantment. There were miles of downhill ski
runs, hiking trails, bobsled and sleigh rides, polo tournaments
and a dozen other activities. Curled around a sparkling lake in
the Engadine Valley 6000 feet high on the southern slope of the
Alps, between Celerina and Piz Nair, the little village made
Catherine gasp with delight.

Catherine and Kirk Reynolds checked into the fabled
Palace Hotel. The lobby was filled with tourists from a dozen
countries.

Kirk Reynolds said to the reception clerk, 'A reservation for
Mr and Mrs Reynolds,' and Catherine looked away. / should
have put on a wedding ring. She was sure everyone in the lobby
was staring at her, knowing what she was doing.

'Yes, Mr Reynolds. Suite two fifteen.' The clerk handed
a bellboy the key, and the bellboy said, 'Right this way, please.'

They were escorted to a lovely suite, simply furnished, with a
spectacular view of the mountains from each window.

When the bellboy left, Kirk Reynolds took Catherine in his
arms. 'I can't tell you how happy you've made me, darling.'

'I hope I will,' Catherine replied. 'I... It's been a long time,
Kirk.'

'Don't worry. I won't rush you.'

He's so dear, Catherine thought, but how would he feel about
me if I told him about my past? She had never mentioned Larry
to him, or the murder trial, or any of the terrible things that had
happened to her. She wanted to feel close to him, to confide in
him, but something held her back.

Td better unpack,' Catherine said.

She unpacked slowly too
slowly and
she suddenly realized
that she was stalling, afraid to finish what she was
doing because
she was afraid of what was going to happen next.
From the other room she heard Kirk calling, 'Catherine . .
.'
Oh, my God, he's going to say let's get undressed and go
to
bed. Catherine swallowed and said in a small voice, 'Yes?'
'Why don't we go outside and look around?'
Catherine went limp with relief. 'That's a wonderful
idea,' she
said enthusiastically. What's the matter with me? I'm in
one of
the most romantic places on earth, with an attractive man
who
loves me, and I'm panicky.
Reynolds was looking at her strangely. 'Are you all
right?'
'Fine,' Catherine said brightly. 'Just fine.'
'You look worried.'
'No. I... I was thinking about about
skiing. It's supposed
to be dangerous.'
Reynolds smiled. 'Don't worry. We'll start you on a gentle
slope, tomorrow. Let's go.'
They put on sweaters and lined jackets and walked outside
into the crisp, clear air.
Catherine breathed deeply. 'Oh, it's wonderful, Kirk. I
love
it here.'
'You ain't seen nothin' yet,' he grinned. 'It's twice as
beautiful
in the summer.'
Will he still want to see me in the summer? Catherine
wondered. Or am I going to be a big disappointment to him?
Why don't I
stop worrying so much?

The village of St Moritz was charming, a medieval marvel,
filled
with quaint shops and restaurants and chalets set among

the
majestic Alps.
They wandered around the shops, and Catherine bought
presents for Evelyn and Wim. They stopped at a little cafe
and
had a fondue.
In the afternoon, Kirk Reynolds hired a sleigh driven by a
bay, and they rode along the snow-covered path up into the
hills,
the snow crunching beneath the metal runners.
'Enjoying?' Reynolds asked.
'Oh, yes.' Catherine looked at him and thought, I'm going
to
make you so happy. Tonight. Yes, tonight. I'm going to
make
you happy tonight.

That evening, they dined in the hotel at the Stiibli, a
restaurant
with the atmosphere of an old country inn.
'This room dates back to fourteen eighty,' Kirk said.
'Then we'd better not order the bread.'
'What?'
'Small joke. Sorry.'
Larry used to understand my jokes; why am I thinking about
him? Because I don't want to think about tonight. I feel
like Marie
Antoinette going to her execution. I won't have cake for
dessert.
The meal was superb, but Catherine was too nervous to
enjoy m, it. When they had finished, Reynolds said, 'Shall we
go upstairs?
I've arranged an early ski lesson for you in the morning.'
§'Sure. Fine. Sure.'
„,(They started upstairs, and Catherine found that her
heart was
j}| pounding. He's going to say, 'Let's go right to bed.'
And why *|t, shouldn't he? That's what I came here for, isn't
it? I can't pretend '»!* / came for the skiing.
J,ft& They reached their suite, and Reynolds opened the
door and
|| turned on the lights .They walked into the bedroom and
Catherine
stared at the large bed. It seemed to take up the whole

room.
Kirk was watching her. 'Catherine ... are you worried about
anything?'
'What?' A hollow little laugh. 'Of course not. I. . . 1 just . . .'
'Just what?'
She gave him a bright smile. 'Nothing. I'm fine.'
'Good. Let's get undressed and go to bed.' Exactly what I
knew he was going to say. But did he have to
say it? We could have just gone ahead and done it. Putting it in
words is so ... so ... crass. 'What did you say?'
Catherine had not realized that she had spoken aloud.
'Nothing.'
Catherine had reached the bed. It was the largest she had ever

seen. It was a bed that had been built for lovers, and lovers only.
It was not a bed to sleep in. It was a bed to ...
'Aren't you going to get undressed, darling?'
Am I? How long has it been since I slept with a man? More
than a year. And he was my husband.
'Cathy . . . ?'
'Yes.' I'm going to get undressed, and I'm going to get into
bed, and I'm going to disappoint you. I'm not in love with you,
Kirk. I can't sleep with you.
'Kirk
He turned to her, half undressed. 'Yes?'
'Kirk, I ... Forgive me. You're going to hate me, but I ...
I can't. I'm terribly sorry. You must think I'm . . .'
She saw the look of disappointment on his face. He forced a
smile. 'Cathy, I told you I'd be patient. If you're not ready yet,
I... I understand. We can still have a wonderful time here.'
She kissed his cheek gratefully. 'Oh, Kirk. Thank you. I feel
so ridiculous. I don't know what's the matter with me.'

'There's nothing the matter with you,' he assured her. 'I understand.'
She hugged him. Thank you. You're an angel.'
'Meanwhile,' he sighed, till sleep on the couch in the living
room.'
'No you won't,' Catherine declared. 'Since I'm the one responsible
for this dumb problem, the least I can do is see that you're
comfortable. I'll sleep on the couch. You take the bed.'
'Absolutely not.'

Catherine lay on the bed, wide awake, thinking about Kirk
Reynolds. Will I ever be able to make love with another man? Or
has Larry burned that out of me? Maybe, in a way, Larry did
manage to kill me after all. Finally, Catherine slept.

Kirk Reynolds was awakened in the middle of the night by the
screams. He sat straight up on the couch and, as the screams
continued, he hurried into the bedroom.
Catherine was flailing about on the bed, her eyes tightly closed.
'No,' she was yelling. 'Don't! Don't! Leave me alone!'
Reynolds knelt down and put his arms around her and held
her close. 'Shhh,' he said. 'It's all right. It's all right.'
Catherine's body was racked with sobs, and he held her close
until they subsided.
'They tried
to drown me.'
'It was only a dream,' he said soothingly. 'You had a bad dream.'
Catherine opened her eyes and sat up. Her body was trembling.
'No, it wasn't a dream. It was real. They tried to kill me.'
Kirk was looking at her, puzzled. 'Who tried to kill you?'
> 'My . . . my husband and his mistress.'

ft»,1 He shook his head. 'Catherine, you had a nightmare,
and . . .'
[jfl 'I'm telling you the truth. They tried to murder me,
and they
were executed for it.'
Kirk's face was filled with disbelief. 'Catherine . . .'
'I didn't tell you before, because it's . . . it's painful
for me to
,, talk about it.'
&
' He suddenly realized that she was serious. 'What
happened?'
'I wouldn't give Larry a divorce, and he ... he was in
love
with another woman, and they decided to murder me.'
Kirk was listening intently now. 'When was this?'
'A year ago.'
'What happened to them?'
'They were they
were executed by the State.'
|i He raised a hand. 'Wait a minute. They were executed
for
> attempting to kill you?'

I 'Yes/
| Reynolds said, 'I'm not an expert on Greek law, but I'm
willing
; to bet that there's no death sentence for attempted
murder. There
has to be some mistake. I know a lawyer in Athens.
Actually,
he works for the State. I'll give him a call in the
morning, and
clear this up. His name is Peter Demonides.'

Catherine was still asleep when Kirk Reynolds awakened. He
dressed quietly and went into the bedroom. He stood there
a
moment, looking down at Catherine. / love her so much. I
have
to find out what really happened, and clear the shadows
away for
her.

Kirk Reynolds went down to the hotel lobby and placed a
phone
call to Athens. 'I'd like to make it person to person,
operator. I
want to speak with Peter Demonides.'
The call came through half an hour later.
'Mr Demonides? This is Kirk Reynolds. I don't know whether
you remember me, but . . .'
'Of course I do. You work for Constantin Demiris.'
'Yes.'
'What can I do for you, Mr Reynolds?'
'Forgive me for bothering you. I'm a bit puzzled about
some
information I just came across. It involves a point of
Greek law.'
'I know a little bit about Greek law,' Demonides said
jovially. till be happy to help you.'
'Is there anything in your law that allows someone to be
executed for attempted murder?'
There was a long silence on the other end of the line.
'May I
ask why you are inquiring?'
'I'm with a woman named Catherine Alexander. She seems
to think that her husband and his mistress were executed
by the
State for trying to kill her. It doesn't sound logical. Do
you see
what I mean?'
'Yes.' Demonides' voice was thoughtful. 'I see what you
mean.
Where are you, Mr Reynolds?'
'I'm staying at the Palace Hotel in St Moritz.'
'Let me check this out, and I'll get back to you.'
'I would appreciate it. The truth is, I think Miss
Alexander
may be imagining things, and I'd like to straighten this
out and
relieve her mind.'
'I understand. You will hear from me. I promise.'

The air was bright and crisp, and the beauty of
Catherine's
surroundings dispelled her terrors of the night before.
The two of them breakfasted in the village, and when they

had finished, Reynolds said, 'Let's go over to the ski slope and
turn you into a snow bunny.'
He took Catherine over to the beginners' slope and hired an
instructor for her.v
Catherine got into her skis, and stood up. She looked down at her feet. 'This is ridiculous. If God had meant us to look like
this, our fathers would have been trees.'
'What?'
'Nothing, Kirk.'
The instructor smiled. 'Don't worry. In no time at all you'll
be skiing like a pro, Miss Alexander. We'll start out at Corviglia
Sass Ronsol. That's the beginners' slope.'
'You'll be surprised at how quickly you'll get the hang of it,'
Reynolds assured Catherine.
He looked over at a ski run in the distance, and turned to the
instructor. 'I think I'll try Fuorcla Grischa today.'
'It sounds delicious. I'll have mine grilled,' Catherine said.
«m Not a smile. 'It's a ski run, darling.'
'* 'Oh.' Catherine felt embarrassed to tell him it was a joke. /
mustn't do that around him, Catherine thought.
The instructor said, The Grischa's a pretty steep run. You might start out on the Corviglia Standard Marguns to warm up,
Mr Reynolds.'
'Good idea. I'll do that. Catherine, I'll meet you at the hotel
|f for lunch.'
'Fine.'
Reynolds waved and walked away.
'Have a nice time,' Catherine called. 'Don't forget to write.'
'Well,' the instructor said. 'Let's go to work.'

To Catherine's surprise, the lessons turned out to be fun. She

was nervous in the beginning. She felt awkward and moved up
the small slope clumsily.

'Lean forward a little. Keep your skis pointed forward.'
'Tell them. They have a mind of their own,' Catherine declared.
'You're doing fine. Now we're going down the slope. Bend your knees. Get your balance. There you go!'
She fell.
'Once more. You're doing fine.'
She fell again. And again. And suddenly, she found her sense
of balance. And it was as though she had wings. She sailed down
the slope, and it was exhilarating. It was almost like flying. She
loved the crunch of the snow beneath her skis and the feel of
the wind batting at her face.
'I love it!' Catherine said. 'No wonder people get hooked on
this. How soon can we do the big slope?'
The instructor laughed. 'Let's stay with this for today. Tomorrow, the Olympics.'
All in all, it was a glorious morning.

She was waiting for Kirk Reynolds in the Grill Room when he
returned from skiing. His cheeks were ruddy and he looked animated. He walked up to Catherine's table and sat down.
'Well,' he asked. 'How did it go?'
'Great. I didn't break anything important. I only fell down six
times. And you know something?' she said proudly. 'Toward the end I got pretty good. I think he's going to enter me in the
Olympics.'
Reynolds smiled. 'Good.' He started to mention the phone call he had made to Peter Demonides, and then decided against
it. He did not want to have Catherine upset again.
After lunch they went for a long walk in the snow, stopping

in at some of the shops to browse. Catherine was beginning to
feel tired.
'I think I'd like to go back to the room,' she said. 'I might
take a little nap.'
'Good idea. The air's pretty thin here, and if you're not used
to it you can get tired easily.'
'What are you going to do, Kirk?'
He looked up at a distant slope. 'I think I might ski down the
Grischa. I've never done it before. It's a challenge.'
'You mean "because
it's there".'
'What?'

'Nothing. It looks so dangerous.'

Reynolds nodded. 'That's why it's a challenge.'

Catherine took his hand. 'Kirk, about last night. I'm sorry. I
. . . I'll try to do better.'

'Don't worry about it. Go back to the hotel and get some sleep.'

'I will.'

Catherine watched him walk away and thought, He's a wonderful
man. I wonder what he sees in an idiot like me?

Catherine slept during the afternoon, and this time there were
no dreams. When she awakened it was almost six o'clock. Kirk
would be returning soon.

Catherine bathed and dressed, thinking about the evening
ahead of her. No, not the evening, she admitted to herself, the

night. I'll make it up to him.

She went to the window and looked out. It was beginning to get dark. Kirk must really be enjoying himself, Catherine thought.
She looked up at the huge slope in the distance. Is that the
Grischa? I wonder if I'll ever be able to ski down that.

At seven o'clock Kirk Reynolds still had not returned. The twilight had turned to a deep blackness. He can't be skiing in the
dark, Catherine thought. I'll bet. he's in the bar downstairs having
a drink.

She started for the door just as the phone rang. Catherine smiled. 7 was right. He's calling me to ask me to join
him downstairs.

| She lifted the receiver and said brightly, 'Well, did you come

I across any Sherpas?'
I A strange voice said, 'Mrs Reynolds?'

I She started to say no, then remembered how Kirk had regis
tered them. 'Yes. This is Mrs Reynolds.'

'I'm afraid I have some bad news for you. Your husband has on been in a skiing accident.'

'Oh, no! Is it... is it serious?'
Tm afraid it is.'
till come right away. Where . . . ?'
Tm sorry to tell you he's . . . he's dead, Mrs Reynolds. He

was skiing the Lagalp and broke his neck.'

I
Chapter 16

Tony Rizzoli watched her come out of the bathroom, naked,
and thought, Why do Greek women have such big asses?
She slid into bed beside him, put her arms around him and
whispered, 'I'm so glad you chose me, poulaki. I wanted
you
from the first moment I saw you.'
It was all Tony Rizzoli could do to keep from laughing out
loud. The bitch had seen too many B movies.
'Sure,' he said. 'I feel the same way, baby.'

He had picked her up at The New Yorker, a sleazy nightclub
on Kallari Street, where she worked as a singer. She was
what
the Greeks contemptuously called a gavyeezee skilo, a
barking
dog. None of the girls who worked at the club had talent
of
in their throats, anyway but
for a price, they were all
available to be taken home. This one, Helena, was
moderately
attractive, with dark eyes, a sensuous face, and a full,
ripe body.
She was twenty-four, a little old for Rizzoli's taste, but
he did
not know any ladies in Athens, and he could not afford to
be
choosy.
'Do you like me?' Helena asked coyly.
'Yeah. Ympazzo about you.'
He began to stroke her breasts, and felt her nipples get
hard,
and squeezed.
'Ouch!'
'Move your head down, baby.'
She shook her head. 'I don't do that.'
Rizzoli stared at her. 'Really?'
The next instant, he grabbed her hair, and pulled.

Helena screamed. 'ParakaloT
Rizzoli slapped her hard across the face. 'Make one more
sound and I'll break your neck.'
Rizzoli dragged her face down between his legs. 'There he
is,
baby. Make him happy.'
'Let me go,' she whimpered. 'You're hurting me.'
Rizzoli tightened his grip on her hair. 'Hey you're
crazy
about me remember?'
He let go of her hair, and she looked up at him, her eyes
blazing.
'You can go . . .'
The look on his face stopped her. There was something
terribly
wrong with this man. Why hadn't she seen it sooner?
'There's no reason for us to fight,' she said placatingly.
'You
and me . . .'
His fingers dug into her neck. 'I'm not paying you for
conversation.'
His fist smashed into her cheek. 'Shut up and go to
work.'
'Of course, sweetheart,' Helena whimpered. 'Of course.'

Rizzoli was insatiable, and by the time he was satisfied,
Helena
was exhausted. She lay at his side until she was sure he
was
asleep, and then she quietly slipped out of bed and got
dressed.
She was in pain. Rizzoli had not paid her yet, and
ordinarily
Helena would have taken the money from his wallet, plus a
handsome tip for herself. But some instinct made her
decide to
leave without taking any money.
An hour later, Tony Rizzoli was awakened by a pounding
on the door. He sat up and peered at his wristwatch. It
was
four o'clock in the morning. He looked around. The girl
had
gone.
'Who is it?' he called.

'It's your neighbor.' The voice was angry. 'There's a telephone
call for you.'
Rizzoli rubbed a hand across his forehead. 'I'm coming.'
He put on a robe and walked across the room to where his
trousers were draped on the back of a chair. He checked his
wallet. His money was all there. So, the bitch wasn't stupid. He
extracted a hundred-dollar bill, walked over to the door and
opened it.
His neighbor was standing in the hallway in a robe and slippers.
'Do you know what time it is?' he asked indignantly. 'You told
me . . .'
Rizzoli handed him the hundred-dollar bill. 'I'm terribly sorry,'
he said apologetically. 'I won't be long.'
The man swallowed, his indignation gone. 'That's all right. It
must be important for someone to wake people up at four o'clock
in the morning.'
Rizzoli walked into the room across the hall and picked up
the phone. 'Rizzoli.'
A voice said, 'You have a problem, Mr Rizzoli.'
'Who is this?'
'Spyros Lambrou asked me to call you.'
'Oh.' He felt a sudden sense of alarm. 'What's the problem?'
'It concerns Constantin Demiris.'
'What about him?'
'One of his tankers, the Thele, is in Marseilles. It's tied up at
the pier in the Bassin de la Grande Joliette.'
'So?'
'We've learned that Mr Demiris has ordered the ship diverted
to Athens. It will be docking there Sunday morning, and sailing
Sunday night. Constantin Demiris plans to be on it when it sails.'

'What?'
'He's running.'
'But he and I have a . . .'
'Mr Lambrou said to tell you that Demiris is planning to hide
out in the United States until he can find a way to get rid of you.'
The sneaky son-of-a-bitch! 'I see. Thank Mr Lambrou for me.
Tell him thanks very much.'
'It's his pleasure.'
Rizzoli replaced the receiver.
'Is everything all right, Mr Rizzoli?'
'What? Yeah. Everything is great.' And it was.

The more Rizzoli thought about the phone call, the more pleased
he was. He had Constantin Demiris running scared. That would
make it a lot easier to handle him. Sunday. He had two days in
which to lay his plans.
Rizzoli knew he had to be careful. He was being followed
wherever he went. Fucking Keystone Kops, Rizzoli thought
contemptuously. When the time comes, I'll dump them.

Early the following morning, Rizzoli walked to a public telephone
booth on Kifissias Street and dialed the number of the
Athens State Museum.
In the reflection in the glass Rizzoli could see a man pretending
to look in a shop window, and across the street another man in
conversation with a flower vendor. The two men were part of
the surveillance team that was covering him. Good luck to
you, Rizzoli thought.
'Office of the curator. Can I help you?'
'Victor? It's Tony.'
'Is anything wrong?' There was sudden panic in Korontzis' voice.
'No,' Rizzoli said soothingly. 'every thing's fine. Victor, you

know that pretty vase with the red figures on it?'
'The Ka amphora.'
'Yeah. I'm going to pick it up tonight.'
There was a long pause. 'Tonight? I... I don't know,
Tony.'
Korontzis' voice was trembling. 'If anything should go
wrong . . .'
'Okay, pal, forget it. T was trying to do you a favor. You
just tell Sal Prizzi you don't have the money, and let him
do
whatever . . .'
'No, Tony. Wait. I. . . I . . . .' There was another pause.
'All
right.'
'You sure it's all right, Victor? Because if you don't
want to
do it, just say so, and I'll head back to the States,
where I don't
have problems like this. I don't need all this
aggravation, you
know. I can . . .'
'No, no. I appreciate everything you're doing for me,
Tony.
Really I do. Tonight will be fine.'
'Okay then. When the museum closes, all you have to do is
substitute a copy for the real vase.'
"The guards check all packages out of here.'
'So what? Are the guards some kind of art experts?'
'No. Of course*not, but . . .'
'All right, Victor, listen to me. You just get a bill of
sale for
one of the copies and stick it with the original in a
paper bag.
Do you understand?'
'Yes. I... I understand. Where will we meet?'
'We're not going to meet. Leave the museum at six o'clock.
There will be a taxi in front. Have the package with you.
Tell
the driver to take you to Hotel Grande Bretagne. Tell him
to
wait for you. Leave the package in the cab. Go into the
hotel
bar and have a drink. After that, go home.'
'But the package . . .'

'Don't worry. It will be taken care of.'
Victor Korontzis was sweating. 'I've never done anything like
this, Tony. I've never stolen anything. All my life . . .'
'I know,' Rizzoli said soothingly. 'Neither have I. Remember,
Victor, I'm taking all the risks, and I don't get a thing out of it.'
Korontzis' voice broke. 'You're a good friend, Tony. The best
friend I ever had.' He was wringing his hands. 'Do you have any
idea when I will get my money?'
'Very soon,' Rizzoli assured him. 'Once we pull this off, you
won't have any more worries.' And neither will /, Rizzoli thought
exultantly. Never again.

Two cruise ships were in the port of Piraeus that afternoon and
consequently the museum was filled with tourists. Usually Victor
Korontzis enjoyed studying them, trying to guess what their lives
were like. There were Americans and British, and visitors
from a dozen other countries. Now, Korontzis was too panicky to
think about them.
He looked over at the two showcases where copies of the
antiquities were sold. There was a crowd around them, and
the two saleswomen were busily trying to keep up with the
demand.
Maybe they'll sell out, Korontzis thought hopefully, and I
won't be able to go through with Rizzoli's plan. But he knew he
was being unrealistic. There were hundreds of replicas stored in
the basement of the museum.
The vase that Tony had asked him to steal was one of the
museum's great treasures. It was from the fifteenth century bc,
an amphora with red mythological figures painted on a

black
background. The last time Victor Korontzis had touched it
had
been fifteen years earlier when he had reverently placed
it inside
the case to be locked up forever. And now I'm stealing it,
Korontzis thought miserably. God help me.

Dazedly, Korontzis went through the afternoon, dreading
the
moment when he would become a thief. He went back to his
office, shut the door, and sat down at his desk, filled
with despair.
/ can't do it, he thought. There has to be some other way
out.
But what? He could think of no way to raise that kind of
money.
He could still hear Prizzi's voice. You'll give me that
money
tonight, or I'm going to feed you to the fish. Do you
understand? The man was a killer. No, he had no choice.
A few minutes before six, Korontzis came out of his
office.
The two women who sold replicas of the artifacts were
beginning
to lock up.
'Signomi,' Korontzis called. 'A friend of mine is having a
birthday. I thought I'd get him something from the
museum.'
He walked over to the case and pretended to be studying
it.
There were vases and busts, chalices and books and maps.
He
looked them over as though trying to decide which to
choose.
Finally, he pointed to the copy of the red amphora. 'I
think he'd
like that one.'
'I'm sure he will,' the woman said. She removed it from
the
case and handed it to Korontzis.
'Could I have a receipt, please?'
'Certainly, Mr Korontzis. Would you like me to gift-wrap
this

for you?'
'No, no,' Korontzis said quickly. 'You can just throw it in a
bag.'
He watched her place the replica in a paper bag and put the
jjtreceipt inside. 'Thank you.'
'I hope your friend enjoys it.'
'I'm sure he will.' He took the bag, his hands trembling, and
^walked back to His office.
He locked the door, then removed the imitation vase from the one bag and placed it on his desk. It's not too late, Korontzis thought.
I / haven't committed any crime yet. He was in an agony of [,indecision. A series of terrifying thoughts ran through his head. a / could run away to another country and abandon my wife and ' children. Or I could commit suicide. I could go to the police and Lfell them I'm being threatened. But when the facts come out I will
be ruined. No, there was no way out. If he did not pay the money
he owed, he knew that Prizzi would kill him. Thank God, he thought, for my friend Tony, Without him, 1 would be a dead
man.
He looked at his watch. Time to move. Korontzis rose to his
'r'feet, his legs unsteady. He stood there, taking deep breaths,
trying to calm himself. His hands were wet with perspiration.
^ .He wiped them on his shirt. He put the replica back in the paper
flbag, and moved toward the door. There was a guard stationed
| at the front door who left at six, after the museum closed, and
"iftnother guard who made the rounds, but he had half a dozen
rooms to cover. He should be at the far end of the museum now.
Korontzis walked out of his office, and bumped into the guard.

He gave a guilty start.
'Excuse me, Mr Korontzis. I didn't know you were still here.'
'Yes. I... I'm just getting ready to leave.'
'You know,' the guard said admiringly, 'I envy you.' If he only knew. 'Really? Why?'
'You know so much about all these beautiful things. I walk around here and I look at them and they're all pieces of history,
aren't they? I don't know much about them. Maybe some day you could explain them to me. I really . . .'
The damn fool would not stop talking. 'Yes, of course. Some
day. I would be happy to.' At the other end of the room, Korontzis could see the cabinet containing the precious vase. He
had to get rid of the guard.

'There . . . there seems to be a problem with the alarm circuit
in the basement. Would you check it out?'

'Sure. I understand that some of the things here date back to . . .'

'Would you mind checking it out now? I don't want to leave before I know that everything is all right.'

'Certainly, Mr Korontzis. I'll be right back.'

Victor Korontzis stood there, watching the guard move through the hall, heading toward the basement. The moment he
was out of sight, Korontzis hurried over to the case containing
the red amphora. He took out a key, and thought, I'm really
going to do it. I'm going to steal it. The key slipped out of his
fingers, and clattered to the floor. Is this a sign? Is God telling
me something? Perspiration was pouring out of him. He bent down and picked up the key, and stared at the vase. It was so

utterly exquisite. It had been made with such loving care by his
ancestors, thousands of years ago. The guard was right; it was a
piece of history, something that could never be replaced.

Korontzis shut his eyes for an instant and shuddered. He looked around to make sure no one was watching, then unlocked
the case and carefully lifted out the vase. He removed the replica
from the paper bag and placed it in the case where the genuine
one had stood.

Korontzis stood there, studying it a moment. It was an expert
reproduction but to him it screamed Fake. It was so
obvious. But only to me, Korontzis thought, and to a few
other experts. No one else could ever tell the difference. And there would be
no reason for anyone to examine it closely. Korontzis closed the
case and locked it, and put the genuine vase in the paper bag
with the receipt.

He took out a handkerchief and wiped his face and hands. It
was done. He looked at his watch. Six ten. He had to hurry. He
moved toward the door and saw the guard coming toward him.

'I couldn't find anything wrong with the alarm system, Mr Korontzis and . . .'

'Good,' Korontzis said. 'We can't be too careful.'

The guard smiled. 'You're right about that. Leaving now?'

'Yes. Goodnight.'

\

'Good night.'
The second guard was at the front door, getting ready to leave.
He noticed the paper bag and grinned. 'I'm going to have to
check that out. Your rules.'
'Of course,' Kdtontzis said quickly. He handed the bag to the
guard.
The guard looked inside, took out the vase and saw the receipt.
'It's a gift for a friend,' Korontzis explained. 'He's an
engineer.' Why did I have to say that? What does he care! I must act
natural.
'Nice.' The guard tossed the vase back into the bag, and for
one terrible instant Korontzis thought it was going to break.
Korontzis clutched the bag to his breast. 'Kalispehra.'
The guard opened the door for him. 'Kalispehra.'
Korontzis went out into the cool night air, breathing heavily
and fighting nausea. He had something worth millions of dollars
in his hands, but Korontzis did not think of it in those terms.
What he was thinking was that he was betraying his country,
stealing a piece of history from his beloved Greece and selling
it to some faceless foreigner.
He started down the steps. As Rizzoli had promised, there
was a taxi waiting in front of the museum. Korontzis moved
toward it, and got in. 'Hotel Grande Bretagne,' he said.
He slumped back in his seat. He felt beaten and exhausted,
as though he had just been through some terrible battle. But
had he won or lost?

When the taxi pulled up in front of Hotel Grande Bretagne,
Korontzis said to the driver, 'Wait here, please.' He took a last
look at the precious package on the back seat, then got

out and
quickly walked into the lobby of the hotel. Inside the door he
turned and watched. A man was entering the taxi. A moment later it sped away.
So. It was done. I'll never have to do anything like this again, Korontzis thought. Not as long as I live. The nightmare is over.

At three o'clock Sunday afternoon, Tony Rizzoli walked out of
his hotel and strolled toward the Platia Omonia. He was wearing
a bright red check jacket, green trousers and a red beret. Two
detectives were trailing him. One of them said, 'He must have
gone shopping for those clothes at a circus.'
At Metaxa Street, Rizzoli hailed a taxi. The detective spoke
into his walkie-talkie. 'The subject is getting into a taxi heading
west.'
A voice replied, 'We see him. We're following. Return to the
hotel.'
'Right.'
An unmarked grey sedan pulled in behind the taxi, keeping a
discreet distance. The taxi headed south, past Monastiraki. In
the sedan the detective seated next to the driver picked up the
hand microphone.
'Central. This is Unit Four. The subject is in a taxi. It's driving
down Philhellinon Street . . . Wait. They just turned right
at Peta Street. It looks like he's headed for the Plaka. We
might lose him in there. Can you have a detail follow him on
foot?'
'Just a minute, Unit Four.' A few seconds later, the radio

crackled back to life. 'Unit Four. We have assistance available.
If he gets off at the Plaka, he'll be kept under surveillance.'
'Kala. The subject is wearing a red check jacket, green trousers
and a red beret. He's hard to miss. Wait a minute. The taxi is
stopping. He's getting out at the Plaka.'
'We'll pass on the information. He's covered. You're clear.
Out.'

At the Plaka, two detectives were watching as the man emerged
from the taxi.
'Where the hell did he buy that outfit?' one of the detectives
wondered aloud.
They closed in behind him and began to follow him through
the crowded maze of the old section of the city. For the next
hour he strolled aimlessly through the streets, wandering past
tavernas, bars, souvenir shops and small art galleries. He walked
Anaphiotika and stopped to browse at a flea market filled
with swords, daggers, muskets, cooking pots, candlesticks, oil
lamps and binoculars.
'What the hell is he up to?'
'It looks like toe's just out for an afternoon stroll. Hold it.
There he goes.'
They followed as he turned into Aghiou Geronda and headed
for Xinos restaurant. The two detectives stood outside, at a
distance, watching him order.
The detectives were beginning to get bored. 'I hope he makes
a move soon. I'd like to go home. I could use a nap.'
'Stay awake. If we lose him, Nicolino will have our ass.'
'How can we lose him? He stands out like a beacon.'
The other detective was staring at him.

'What? What did you say?'
'I said . . .'
'Never mind.' There was a sudden urgency in his voice.
'Did
you get a look at his face?'
'No.'
'Neither did I. Tiflo! Come on.'
The two detectives hurried into the restaurant and strode
up
to his table.
They were looking into the face of a complete stranger.

Inspector Nicolino was in a fury. 'I had three teams
assigned to
follow Rizzoli. How could you lose him?'
'He pulled a switch on us, Inspector. The first team saw
him
get into a taxi and . . .'
'And they lost the taxi?'
'No, sir. We watched him get out. Or at least we thought
it
was him. He was wearing a wild outfit. Rizzoli had another
passenger hidden in the taxi, and the two men switched
clothes.
We followed the wrong man.'
'And Rizzoli rode away in the taxi.'
'Yes, sir.'
'Did you get the license number?'
'Well, no, sir. It it
didn't seem important.'
'What about the man you picked up?'
'He's a bellboy at Rizzoli's hotel. Rizzoli told him he
was
playing a joke on someone. He gave him a hundred dollars.
That's all the boy knows.'
Inspector Nicolino took a deep breath. 'And I don't
suppose
anyone knows where Mr Rizzoli is at this moment?'
'No, sir. I'm afraid not.'

Greece has seven main ports -Thessaloniki,
Patras, Volos,
Igoumenitsa, Kavala, Iraklion and Piraeus.
Piraeus lies seven miles southwest of the center of

Athens,
and it serves not only as the main port of Greece, but as one of
the major ports of Europe. The port complex consists of four
harbors, three of them for pleasure boats and oceangoing
vessels. The fourth harbor, Herakles, is reserved for freighters
fitted with hatches opening directly onto the quay.
The Thele was lying at anchor at Herakles. It was a huge
tanker, and lying still in the dark harbor, it resembled a giant
behemoth ready to pounce.
Tony Rizzoli, accompanied by four men, drove up to the pier.
Rizzoli looked up at the huge ship and thought, So it is here.
Now let's see if our friend Demiris is aboard.
He turned to the men with him. 'I want two of you to wait
here. The other two come with me. See that nobody gets off the
ship.'
'Right.'
Rizzoli and two men walked up the gangplank. As they
reached the top, a deck hand approached them. 'Can I help
you?'
'We're here to see Mr Demiris.'
'Mr Demiris is in the owner's cabin. Is he expecting you?'
So the tip-off was right. Rizzoli smiled. 'Yeah. He's expecting
us. What time is the ship sailing?'
'At midnight. I'll show you the way.'
'Thank you.'
They followed the sailor along the deck until they came to a
ladder that led below. The three men trailed him down the
ladder and along a narrow passageway, passing half a dozen
cabins along the way.
When they arrived at the last cabin, the sailor started to
knock.
Rizzoli pushed him aside. 'We'll announce ourselves.' He shoved
the door open and walked in.

The cabin was larger than Rizzoli had expected. It was furnished
with a bed and a couch, a desk, and two easy chairs.
Behind the desk sat Constantin Demiris.
When he looked up and saw Rizzoli, Demiris scrambled to his
feet. His face paled. 'What . . . what are you doing here?' His
voice was a whisper.
'My friends and I decided to pay you a little bon voyage visit,
Costa.'
'How did you know I . . . ? I mean. . . I wasn't expecting you.'
'I'm sure you weren't,' Rizzoli said. He turned to the sailor.
'Thanks, pal.'
The sailor left.
Rizzoli turned back to Demiris. 'Were you planning on taking
a trip without saying goodbye to your partner?'
Demiris said quickly, 'No. Of course not. I just... I just came
to check out some things on the ship. She's sailing tomorrow
morning.' His fingers were trembling.
Rizzoli moved closer to him. When he spoke, his voice was
soft. 'Costa baby, you made a big mistake. There's no point in
trying to run away, because you have no place to hide. You and
I have a deal, remember? Do you know what happens to people
who welsh on deals? They die bad real
bad.'
Demiris swallowed. 'I... I'd like to talk to you alone.'
Rizzoli turned to his men. 'Wait outside.'
When they were gone, Rizzoli sank into an armchair. 'I'm
very disappointed in you, Costa.'
'I can't go through with this,' Demiris said. 'I'll give you money
more
money than you've ever dreamed of.'
'In return for what?'

'For getting off this ship and leaving me alone.' There
was
desperation in Demiris' voice. 'You can't do this to me.
The
government will take my fleet away. I'll be ruined.
Please. I'll
give you anything you want.'
Tony Rizzoli smiled. 'I have everything I want. How many
tankers do you have? Twenty? Thirty? We're going to keep
them
all busy, you and me. All you have to do is add an extra
port of
call or two.'
'You . . . you don't have any idea what you're doing to
me.'
'I guess you should have thought of that before you pulled
that little frame-up.' Tony Rizzoli rose to his feet.
'You're going
to have a talk with the captain. Tell him we're going to
make an
extra stop, off the coast of Florida.'
Demiris hesitated. 'All right. When you come back in the
morning . . .'
Rizzoli laughed. 'I'm not going any place. The games are
over.
You were planning to sneak away at midnight. Fine. I'm
going
to sneak away with you. We're bringing a load of heroin
aboard,
Costa, and just to sweeten the deal, we're taking along
one of
the treasures from the State Museum. And you're going to
smuggle it into the United States for me. That's your
punishment
for trying to double-cross me.'
There was a dazed look in Demiris' eyes. 'I isn't
there
anything,' he pleaded, 'anything I can do to . . . ?'
Rizzoli patted him on the shoulder. 'Cheer up. I promise
you're going to enjoy being my partner.'
Rizzoli walked over to the door and opened it. 'All right,
let's
load the stuff on board,' he said.
'Where do you want us to put it?'

There are hundreds of hiding places on any ship, but Rizzoli did not feel the need to be clever. Constantin Demiris' fleet was above suspicion.
'Put it in a sack of potatoes,' he said. 'Mark the sack and stow it in the rear of the galley. Bring the vase to Mr Demiris. He's going to take care of it personally.' Rizzoli turned to Demiris, his eyes filled with contempt. 'Do you have any problem with that?'
Demiris tried to speak, but no words came out.
'All right, boys,' Rizzoli said. 'Let's move.'
Rizzoli settled back in the armchair. 'Nice cabin. I'm going to let you keep it, Costa. My boys and I will find our own quarters.'
'Thank you,' Demiris said miserably. 'Thank you.'

At midnight, the huge tanker sailed away from the wharf with two tugboats guiding it out to sea. The heroin had been hidden aboard, and the vase had been delivered to Constantin Demiris' cabin.
Tony Rizzoli called one of his men aside. 'I want you to go to the radio room and tear out the wireless. I don't want Demiris sending any messages.'
'Gotcha, Tony.'
Constantin Demiris was a broken man, but Rizzoli was taking no chances.

Rizzoli had been afraid up until the moment of sailing that something might go wrong, for what was happening was beyond his wildest dreams. Constantin.Demiris, one of the richest, most powerful men in the world, was his partner. Partner, hell,

Rizzoli
thought. / own the bastard. His whole goddamned fleet
belongs
to me. I can ship as much stuff as the boys can deliver.
Let the
other guys break their asses trying to figure out how to
smuggle
the stuff into the States. I've got it made. And then
there's all the him* treasures from the museum. That's
another real gold mine. Only
it all belongs to me. What the boys don't know won't hurt
them. Tony Rizzoli fell asleep dreaming of a fleet of golden
ships
and palaces and nubile serving girls.

When Rizzoli awoke in the morning, he and his men went to
the dining room for breakfast. Half a dozen crew members
were already there. A steward approached the table. 'Good
morning.'
'Where's Mr Demiris?' Rizzoli asked. 'Isn't he having
breakfast?'
'He's staying in his cabin, Mr Rizzoli. He gave us
instructions
to give you and your friends anything you want.'
'That's very nice of him,' Rizzoli smiled. 'I'll have some
orange
juice, and bacon and eggs. What about you, boys?'
'Sounds good.'
When they had ordered, Rizzoli said, 'I want you boys to
play

it cool. Keep your pieces out of sight. Be nice and
polite.
Remember, we're Mr Demiris' guests.'

Demiris did not appear for lunch that day. Nor did he show
up
for dinner.
Rizzoli went up to have a talk with him.
Demiris was in his cabin, staring out of a porthole. He
looked
pale and drawn.
Rizzoli said, 'You gotta eat to keep your strength up,
partner.

I wouldn't want you to get sick. We have a lot to do. I told the
steward to send in some dinner here.'
Demiris took a deep breath. 'I can't all
right. Get out,
please.'
Rizzoli grinned. 'Sure. After dinner, get some sleep. You look
terrible.'

In the morning, Rizzoli went to see the captain.
'I'm Tony Rizzoli,' he said. 'I'm a guest of Mr Demiris.'
'Ah, yes. Mr Demiris told me you would be coming to see
me. He mentioned that there might be a change of course?'
'Right. I'll let you know. When will we be arriving off the
coast of Florida?'
'In approximately three weeks, Mr Rizzoli.'
'Good. I'll see you later.'
Rizzoli left and strolled around the ship his ship. The whole
goddamned fleet was his. The world was his. Rizzoli was filled
with a euphoria such as he had never known.

The crossing was smooth, and from time to time, Rizzoli dropped
into Constantin Demiris' cabin.
'You should have some broads on board,' Rizzoli said. 'But I
guess you Greeks don't need broads, do you?'
Demiris refused to rise to the bait.

The days passed slowly, but every hour brought Rizzoli closer
to his dreams. He was in a fever of impatience. A week passed,
then another week, and they were nearing the North American
continent.

On Saturday evening Rizzoli was standing at the ship's rail
looking out at the ocean when there was a flash of

lightning.

The first mate came up to him. 'We might be in for some rough weather, Mr Rizzoli. I hope you're a good sailor.'

Rizzoli shrugged. 'Nothing bothers me.'

The sea began its swell. The ship started to dip into the sea
and then buck upwards as it ploughed through the waves.

Rizzoli began to feel queasy. So I'm not a good sailor, he thought. What's the difference? He owned the world. He returned
to his cabin early and got into bed.

He had dreams. This time,, there were no golden ships or beautiful naked girls. They were dark dreams. There was a war
going on, and he could hear the roar of cannons. An explosion
woke him up.

Rizzoli sat up in bed, wide awake. The cabin was rocking. The
ship was in the middle of a goddamned storm. He could hear footsteps running through the corridor. What the hell was going
on?

Tony Rizzoli hurried out of bed and went into the corridor.
The floor suddenly listed to one side and he almost lost his
balance.

'What's happening?' he called to one of the men running past
him.

'An explosion. The ship's on fire. We're sinking. You'd better
get up on deck.'

'Sinking . . . ?' Rizzoli could not believe it. Everything had
gone so smoothly. But it doesn't matter, Rizzoli thought. / can
afford to lose this shipment. There will be plenty more. I've got
to save Demiris. He's the key to everything. We'll send out a call
for help. And then he remembered that he had ordered the wireless destroyed.

Fighting to keep his balance, Tony Rizzoli made his way toward the companionway and climbed up to the deck. To his surprise, he saw that the storm had cleared. The sea was smooth.

air
:
A full moon had come out. There was another loud explosion,
and another, and the ship started to list farther. The stern was
in the water, going down rapidly. Sailors were trying to lower
the lifeboats, but it was too late. The water around the ship was
a mass of burning oil. Where was Constantin Demiris?
And then Rizzoli heard it. It was a whirring sound, pitched
high above the thunder of the explosions. He looked up. There
was a helicopter poised ten feet above the ship.
We're saved, Rizzoli thought jubilantly. He waved frantically
at the helicopter.
A face appeared at the window. It took Rizzoli a moment to realize that it was Constantin Demiris. He was smiling, and in
his raised hand he was holding up the priceless amphora.
Rizzoli stared, his brain trying to put together what was happening. How had Constantin Demiris found a helicopter in
the middle of the night to . . . ?
And then Rizzoli knew, and his bowels turned to water.

Constantin Demiris had never had any intention of doing
business with him. The son-of-a-bitch had planned the
whole
thing from the beginning. The phone call telling him that
Demiris
was running away that
phone call hadn't come from Spyros
Lambrou it
had come from Demiris! He had laid his trap to
get him on the ship, and Rizzoli had leaped into it.
The tanker started to sink deeper, faster, and Rizzoli
felt the
cold ocean lapping at his feet, and then his knees. The
bastard
was going to let them all die here, in the middle of
nowhere,
where there would be no trace of what happened.
Rizzoli looked up at the helicopter, and yelled
frantically,
'Come back, I'll give you anything!' The wind whipped his
words
away.
The last thing Tony Rizzoli saw before the ship heeled
over
and his eyes filled with the burning salt water was the
helicopter
zooming toward the moon.

Chapter 17

St Moritz

Catherine was in a state of shock. She sat on the couch in
her
hotel room, listening to Lieutenant Hans Bergman, head of
the
ski patrol, tell her that Kirk Reynolds was dead. The
sound of
Bergman's voice flowed over Catherine in waves, but she
was
not listening to the words. She was too numbed by the
horror of
what had happened. All the people around me die, she
thought

despairingly. Larry's dead, and now Kirk. And there were the
others: Noelle, Napoleon Chotas, Frederick Stavros. It was an
unending nightmare.
Vaguely, through the fog of her despair, she heard Hans
Bergman's voice. 'Mrs Reynolds . . . Mrs Reynolds . . .'
She raised her head. 'I'm not Mrs Reynolds,' she said
wearily. 'I'm Catherine Alexander. Kirk and I were . . . were
friends.'
'I see.'
Catherine took a deep breath. 'How . . . how did it happen?
Kirk was such a good skier.'
'I know. He skied here many times.' He shook his head. 'To
tell you the truth, Miss Alexander, I'm puzzled about what
happened. We found his body on the Lagalp, a slope that was
closed because of an avalanche last week. The sign must have
been blown down by the wind. I'm terribly sorry.'
Sorry. What a weak word, what a stupid word.
'How would you like us to handle the funeral arrangements,
Miss Alexander?'
So death was not the end. No, there were arrangements to be
made. Coffins and burial plots, and flowers, and relatives to be
notified. Catherine wanted to scream.
'Miss Alexander?'
Catherine looked up. till notify Kirk's family.'
'Thank you.'

The trip back to London was a mourning. She had come up to
the mountains with Kirk, filled with eager hope, thinking that it
was, perhaps, a new beginning, a door to a new life.
Kirk had been so gentle and so patient. / should have made
love with him, Catherine thought. But in the end, would it really
have mattered? What did anything matter? I'm under some kind
of curse. I destroy everyone who comes near me.

When Catherine returned to London, she was too depressed
to
go back to work. She stayed in the flat, refusing to see
anyone,
or talk to anyone. Anna, the housekeeper, prepared meals
for
her and took them to Catherine's room, but the trays were
returned, untouched.
'You must eat something, Miss Alexander.'
But the thought of food made Catherine ill.

The next day Catherine was feeling worse. She felt as
though her chest were filled with iron. She found it
difficult to
breathe.

/ can't go on like this, Catherine thought. / have to do
something.
She discussed it with Evelyn Kaye.
'I keep blaming myself for what happened.'
'That doesn't make sense, Catherine.'
'I know it doesn't, but I can't help it. I feel
responsible. I need
someone to talk to. Maybe if I saw a psychiatrist . . .'
'I know one who's awfully good,' Evelyn said. 'As a matter
of
fact, he sees Wim from time to time. His name is Alan
Hamilton.
I had a friend who was suicidal and by the time Dr
Hamilton
was through treating her, she was in great shape. Would
you
like to see him?'
What if he tells me I'm crazy? What if I am? 'All right,'
Catherine said reluctantly.
till try to make*he appointment for you. He's pretty
busy.'
'Thanks, Evelyn. I appreciate it.'
Catherine went into Wim's office. He would want to know
about Kirk, she thought.
'Wim do
you remember Kirk Reynolds? He was killed a few
days ago in a skiing accident.'

'Yeah? Westminster-ohfourseven-one.'
Catherine blinked. 'What?' And she suddenly realized that
Wim was reciting Kirk's telephone number. Was that all
people
meant to Wim? A series of numbers? Didn't he have any
feelings
|i for them? Was he really unable to love or hate or feel
compassion?
Perhaps he's better off than I am, Catherine thought. At
least
he's spared the terrible pain that the rest of us can
feel.

Evelyn arranged an appointment for Catherine with Dr
Hamilton
for the following Friday. Evelyn thought of telephoning
Constan-tin
Demiris to tell him what she had done, but she decided it
was too unimportant to bother him about.

I Alan Hamilton's office was on Wimpole Street. Catherine
went
'' there for her first appointment, apprehensive and
angry. Apprehensive
because she was fearful of what he might say about her,
and angry with herself for having to rely on a stranger to
help
her with problems she felt she should have been able to
solve
herself.
The receptionist behind the glass window said, 'Dr
Hamilton a is ready for you, Miss Alexander.'
But am I ready for him? Catherine wondered. She was filled
with sudden panic. What am I doing here? I'm not going to
put
myself in the hands of some quack who probably thinks he's
God. Catherine said, 'I I've
changed my mind. I don't really need

to see the doctor. I'll be happy to pay for the
appointment.'
'Oh? Just a moment, please.'
'But . . .'
The receptionist had disappeared into the doctor's office.

A few moments later, the door to the office opened, and Alan
Hamilton came out. He was in his early forties, tall and blond
with bright blue eyes, and an easy manner.
He looked at Catherine and smiled. 'You've made my day,' he said.
Catherine frowned. 'What . . . ?'
'I didn't realize how good a doctor I really was. You just
walked into my reception office, and you're already feeling
better. That must be some kind of record.'
Catherine said defensively, 'I'm sorry. I made a mistake. I
don't need any help.'
'I'm delighted to hear that,' Alan Hamilton said. 'I wish all
my patients felt that way. As long as you're here, Miss Alexander,
why don't you come in for a moment? We'll have a cup
of coffee.'
Thank you, no. I don't
'I promise you can drink it sitting up.'
Catherine hesitated. 'All right, just for a minute.'
She followed him into his office. It was very simple, done in
quiet good taste, furnished more like a living room than an
office. There were soothing prints hanging on the walls, and on
a coffee table was a photograph of a beautiful woman with a
young boy. All right, so he has a nice office and an attractive
family. What does that prove?
'Please sit down,' Dr Hamilton said. 'The coffee should be
ready in a minute.'
'I really shouldn't be wasting your time, Doctor. I'm . . .'
'Don't worry about that.' He sat in an easy chair, studying
her. 'You've been through a lot,' he said sympathetically.
'What do you know about it?' Catherine snapped. Her tone
was angrier than she had intended.

'I spoke with Evelyn. She told me what happened at St
Moritz.
I'm sorry.'
That damned word again. 'Are you? If you're such a
wonderful

doctor, maybe you can bring Kirk back to life.' All the
misery
that had been pent up inside her broke, erupting in a
torrent, and
to her horror Catherine found that she was sobbing
hysterically.
'Leave me alone,' she screamed. 'Leave me alone.'

Alan Hamiltons'sat there watching her, saying nothing.

When Catherine's sobs finally subsided she said wearily,
Tm
sorry. Forgive me. I really must go now.' She rose, and
started
toward the door.

'Miss Alexander, I don't know whether I can help you, but
I'd like to try. I can promise you only that whatever I do
won't
hurt you.'

Catherine stood at the door, undecided. She turned to look
at him, her eyes filled with tears. 'I don't know what's
the matter
with me,' she whispered. 'I feel so lost.'

Alan Hamilton rose, and walked over to her. 'Then why
don't
we try to find you? We'll work on it together. Sit down.
I'll see
about that coffee.'

He was gone for five minutes, and Catherine sat there,
wondering
how he had talked her into staying. He had a calming
effect.
There was something in his manner that was reassuring.

Maybe he can help me, Catherine thought.

Alan Hamilton came back into the room carrying two cups of
coffee. 'There's cream and sugar, if you like.'

'No, thank you.'

He sat down across from her. 'I understand your friend
died
in a skiing accident.'

It was so painful to talk about. 'Yes. He was on a slope
that
was supposed to have been closed. The wind blew the sign
down.'

'Is this your first encounter with the death of someone
close
to you?'

How was she supposed to answer that? Oh, no. My husband
and his mistress were executed for trying to murder me.
Everyone
around me dies. That would shake him up. He was sitting
there, waiting for an answer, the smug son-of-a-bitch.
Well, she
wouldn't give him the satisfaction. Her life was none of
his
business. I hate him.

Alan Hamilton saw the anger in her face. He deliberately
changed the subject. 'How's Wim?' he asked.

The question threw Catherine completely off-guard. 'Wim?
He he's
fine. Evelyn told me he's a patient of yours.'
'Yes.'
'Can you explain how he why
he is
like he is?'
'Wim came to me because he kept losing jobs. He's
something
very rare a
genuine misanthrope. I can't go into the reasons

why, but basically, he hates people. He is unable to relate to
other people.'
Catherine remembered Evelyn's words. He has no emotions. He'll never get attached to anyone.
'But Wim is brilliant with mathematics,' Alan Hamilton went
on. 'He's in a job now where he can apply that knowledge.'
Catherine nodded. 'I've never known anyone like him.'
Alan Hamilton leaned forward in his chair. 'Miss Alexander,'
he said, 'what you're going through is very painful, but I think
I might be able to make it easier for you. I'd like to try.'
'I ... I don't know,' Catherine said. 'Everything seems so hopeless.'
'As long as you feel that way,' Alan Hamilton smiled, 'there's
nowhere to go but up, is there?' His smile was infectious. 'Why
don't we set just one more appointment? If, at the end of that
one, you still hate me, we'll call it quits.'
'I don't hate you,' Catherine said apologetically. 'Well, a little
bit maybe.'
Alan Hamilton walked over to his desk and studied his calendar.
His schedule was completely booked.
'What about Monday?' he asked. 'One o'clock?' One o'clock
was his lunch hour, but he was willing to forgo that. Catherine
Alexander was a woman carrying an unbearable burden, and he
was determined to do everything he could to help her.
Catherine looked at him a long moment. 'All right.'
'Fine. I'll see you then.' He handed her a card. 'In the meantime,
if you need me, here's my office number and my home
number. I'm a light sleeper, so don't worry about waking me
up.'
'Thank you,' Catherine said. till be here Monday.'

Dr Alan Hamilton watched her walk out the door and he
thought, She's so vulnerable, and so beautiful. I have to
be
careful. He looked at the photograph on his coffee table.
/ wonder what Angela would think?

The call came in the middle of the night.
Constantin Demiris listened and when he spoke his voice
was
filled with surprise. 'The Thele sank? I can't believe
it.'
'It's true, Mr Demiris. The coast guard found a few pieces
of
the wreckage.'
'Were there any survivors?'
'No, sir. I'm afraid not. All hands were lost.'
"That's terrible. Does anyone know how it happened?'
Tm afraid we'll never know, sir. All the evidence is at
the
bottom of the sea.'
'The sea,' Demiris murmured, 'the cruel sea.'
'Shall we go ahead and file an insurance claim?'
'It's hard to worry about things like that when all those
brave
men have lost their lives but
yes, go ahead and file the claim.'
He would keep the vase in his private collection.
Now it was time to punish his brother-in-law.

Chapter 18

Spyros Lambrou was in a frenzy of impatience, waiting for
the news of Constantin Demiris' arrest. He kept the radio
on
constantly in his office, and scanned every edition of the
daily newspapers. / should have heard something by now,
Lambrou thought. The police should have arrested Demiris by
this time.
The moment Tony Rizzoli had informed Spyros that Demiris
was on board the Thele and was about to sail, Lambrou had
notified US Customs anonymously,
of course.
They must have caught him by now. Why haven't the
newspapers

picked up the story?
His intercom buzzed. 'Mr Demiris is on line two for you.'
'Someone is calling for Mr Demiris?'
'No, Mr Lambrou. Mr Demiris himself is on the line.' The
words sent a chill through him.
It was impossible!
Nervously, Lambrou picked up the phone. 'Costa?'
'Spyros.' Demiris' voice was jovial. 'How is everything
going?'
'Fine, fine. Where are you?'
'In Athens. What about lunch today? Are you free?'
Lambrou had an important luncheon engagement. 'Yes. That
will be fine.'
'Good. We'll meet at the club. Two o'clock.'
Lambrou replaced the receiver, his hands trembling. What
in
God's name could have gone wrong? Well, he would find out
what had happened soon enough.

Constantin Demiris kept Spyros waiting for thirty minutes,
and
when he finally arrived he said brusquely, 'Sorry I'm
late.'
That's all right.'
Spyros studied Demiris carefully, looking for any signs
of the
recent experience he must have gone through. Nothing.
'I'm hungry,' Demiris said cheerfully. 'How about you?
Let's
see what they have on the menu today.' He scanned the
menu.
'Ah. Strldia. Would you like to start with some oysters,
Spyros?'
'No. I don't think so.' He had lost his appetite. Demiris
was acting much too cheerful, and Lambrou had a terrible
premonition.
When they had ordered, Demiris said, 'I want to thank you,
Spyros.'
Spyros eyed him warily. 'What for?'
'What for? For sending me a good customer Mr
Rizzoli.'
Lambrou wet his lips. 'You you
met with him?'
'Oh, yes. He assured me that we were going to do a lot of

business together in the future.' Demiris sighed. 'Although I'm
afraid Mr Rizzoli doesn't have much of a future anymore.'
Spyros tensed. 'What do you mean?'
Constantin Demiris' voice hardened. 'What I mean is that Tony Rizzoli is dead.'
'How did . . . ? What happened?'
'He had an accident, Spyros.' He was looking into his brother-in-law's
eyes. 'The way anyone who tries to double-cross me has an accident.'
'I don't... I don't understand. You . . .'
'Don't you? You tried to destroy me. You failed. I promise you, it would have been better for you if you had succeeded.'
'I -1 don't know what you're talking about.'
'Don't you, Spyros?' Constantin Demiris smiled. 'You will very soon. But first, I'm going to destroy your sister.'
The oysters arrived.
'Ah,' Demiris said, 'they look delicious. Enjoy your lunch.'

Afterward, Constantin Demiris thought about the meeting with
a feeling of deep satisfaction. Spyros Lambrou was a man completely
demoralized. Demiris knew how much Lambrou adored
his sister and Demiris intended to punish them both.
But there was something he had to take care of first. Catherine
Alexander. She had called him after Kirk's death, near hysteria.
'It's-it's so awful.'
Tm so sorry, Catherine. I know how fond of Kirk you must have been. It's a terrible loss for both of us.'
I'm going to have to change my plans, Demiris thought. There's
no time for Rafina now. Too bad. Catherine was the only remaining
link to connect him with what had happened to Noelle Page
and Larry Douglas. It was a mistake to let her live this long. As
long as she was alive, someone would be able to prove what
Demiris had done. But with her dead, he would be perfectly

safe.
He picked up a telephone on his desk and dialed a number.
When a voice answered, Demiris said, 'I'll be in Kowloon
Monday.
Be there.' He hung up without waiting for a response.

The two men met in a deserted building that Demiris owned
in
the walled city.
'It must look like an accident. Can you arrange that?'
Constan-tin
Demiris asked.
It was an insult. He could feel the anger rising in him.
That
was a question you asked some amateur you picked up from
the
streets. He was tempted to reply with sarcasm: Oh, I think
I can
manage that. Would you prefer an accident indoors? lean
arrange
for her to break her neck falling down a flight of stairs.
The dancer
in Marseilles. Or she could get drunk and drown in her
bath. The
heiress in Gstaad. She could take an overdose of heroin.
He had
disposed of three that way. Or she could fall asleep in
bed with
a lighted cigarette. The Swedish detective at L'Hótel on
the Left
Bank in Paris. Or perhaps you would prefer something
outdoors?
I can arrange a traffic accident, a plane crash, or a
disappearance
at sea.
But he said none of those things, for in truth, he was
afraid
of the man seated across from him. He had heard too many
chilling stories about him, and he had reason to believe
them.
So all he said was, 'Yes sir, I can arrange an accident.
No one
will ever know.' Even as he said the words, the thought
struck

him: He knows that I'll know. He waited. He could hear the

street noises outside the window, and the shrill and raucous
polyglot of languages that belonged to the residents of the walled
city.
Demiris was studying him with cold, obsidian eyes.
When he finally spoke he said, 'Very well. I will leave the
method to you.'
'Yes, sir. Is the target here in Kowloon?'
'London. Her name is Catherine. Catherine Alexander. She
works in my London offices.'
'It would help if I could get an introduction to her. An inside
track.'
Demiris thought for a moment. 'I'm sending a delegation of
executives to London next week. I'll arrange for you to be in
the party.' He leaned forward and said quietly, 'One thing more.'
'Yes, sir?'
'I don't want anyone to be able to identify her body.'

Chapter 19

Constantin Demiris was calling. 'Good morning, Catherine. How
are you feeling today?'
'Fine, thank you, Costa.'
'You are feeling better?'
'Yes.'
'Good. I'm very pleased to hear that. I'm sending a delegation
of our company executives to London to study our operation
there. I would appreciate it if you would take them in hand and
look after them.'
till be happy to. When will they be arriving?'
'Tomorrow morning.'
till do everything I can.'
'I know I can count on you. Thank you, Catherine.'
'You're welcome.'

Goodbye, Catherine.
The connection was broken.

So, that was done! Constantin Demiris sat back in his chair
thinking. With Catherine Alexander gone, there would be no
more loose ends. Now he could turn his full attention to his wife
and her brother.

'We're having company tonight. Some executives from the office.
I want you to act as hostess.'
It had been so long since she had been a hostess for her
husband. Melina felt elated, excited. Perhaps this will change
things.

The dinner that evening changed nothing. Three men arrived,
dined and left. The dinner was a blur.
Melina was perfunctorily introduced to the men and sat there
while her husband charmed them. She had almost forgotten how
charismatic Costa^ould be. He told amusing stories and gave
them lavish compliments, and they loved it. They were in the
presence of a great man, and they showed that they were aware
of it. Melina never got a chance to speak. Every time she started
to say something, Costa interrupted, until finally she sat there
in silence.
Why did he want me here? Melina wondered.
At the end of the evening, as the men were leaving, Demiris
said, 'You'll be flying to London early in the morning. I'm sure
you'll take care of everything that needs to be done.'
And they were gone.

The delegation arrived in London the following morning. There
were three of them, all of different nationalities.
The American, Jerry Haley, was a tall, muscular man with a
friendly, open face and slate-grey eyes. He had the largest hands
Catherine had ever seen. She was fascinated by them. They
seemed to have a life of their own, constantly in motion, twisting
and turning, as though eager to have something to do.
The Frenchman, Yves Renard, was a sharp contrast. He was
short and stout. His features were pinched, and he had cold,
probing eyes that seemed to see through Catherine. He appeared
withdrawn and self-contained. Wary was the word that came to
Catherine's mind. But wary of what? Catherine wondered.
The third member of the delegation was Dino Mattusi. He
was Italian, friendly and ingratiating, exuding charm through
every pore.
'Mr Demiris thinks highly of you,' Mattusi said.
'That's very flattering.'
'He said you are going to take care of us in London. Look, I
brought you a little gift.' He handed Catherine a package with
an Hermes label on it. Inside was a beautiful silk scarf.
'Thank you,' Catherine said. 'That's very thoughtful of you.'

She looked at the others. 'Let me show you to your offices.'

Behind them was a loud crash. They all turned. A young boy
stood there, staring in dismay at a package he had dropped. He
was carrying three suitcases. The boy looked about fifteen and
was small for his age. He had curly brown hair and bright green
eyes, and he was fragile-looking.

'For Christ's sake,' Renard snapped. 'Be careful with those
things!'

'I'm sorry,' the boy said nervously. 'Excuse me. Where shall
I put the suitcases?'

Renard said impatiently, 'Put them anywhere. We'll get them
later.'

Catherine looked at the boy inquiringly. Evelyn explained,
'He quit his job as an office boy in Athens. We needed another
office boy here.'

'What's your name?' Catherine asked.

'Atanas Stavich, ma'am.' He was near tears.

'All right, Atanas. There's a room in back where you can put
the suitcases. I'll see that they're taken care of.'

The boy said gratefully, 'Thank you, ma'am.'

Catherine turned back to the men. 'Mr Demiris said that you'll
be studying our operation here. I'll help you in every way I can.
If there is anything at all you need, I'll try to arrange it for you.
Now, if you gentlemen will come with me, I'll introduce you to
Wim and the rest of the staff.' As they walked down the corridor,
Catherine stopped to make the introductions. They reached
Wim's office.

'Wim, this is the delegation Mr Demiris sent. This is Yves
Renard, Dino Mattusi and Jerry Haley. They just arrived from
Greece.'

Wim glared at them. 'Greece has a population of only seven million six hundred and thirty thousand.' The men looked at one
another, puzzled.

Catherine smiled to herself. They were having exactly the same reaction to Wim that she had had when she first met him.

'I've had your offices prepared,' Catherine said to the men.
'Would you like to follow me?'

When they were out in the corridor, Jerry Haley asked, 'What

the hell was that? Someone said he was important around here.'

'He is,' Catherine assured him. 'Wim keeps track of the finances of all the various divisions.'

'I wouldn't let him keep track of my cat,' Haley snorted.

'When you get te know him better . . .'

'I do not wish to get to know him better,' the Frenchman muttered.

'I've arranged your hotels for you,' Catherine told the group.
'I understand each of you wants to stay in a different hotel.'

'That's right,' Mattusi replied.

Catherine started to make a comment, then decided not to. It
was none of her business why they had chosen to stay at different
hotels.

He watched Catherine, thinking, She's much prettier than I expected. That will make it more interesting. And she has suffered
pain. I can read it in her eyes. I will teach her how exquisite pain
can be. We will enjoy it together. And when I have finished with
her, I will send her where there is no more pain. She will go to
the Maker or the Baker. I'm going to enjoy this. I am going to
enjoy this very much.

Catherine showed the men to their respective offices, and when
fs they were settled in, she started to return to her own desk. From

the corridor she heard the Frenchman yelling at the young boy.

'This is the wrong briefcase, stupid. Mine is the brown one.
Brown! Do you understand English?'
'Yes, sir. I'm sorry, sir.' His voice was filled with
panic. I'm going to have to do something about this, Catherine
js, thought.

Evelyn Kaye said, 'If you need any help with this group, I'm
here.'
'I appreciate it, Evelyn. I'll let you know.'

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I
A few minutes later, Atanas Stavich walked past Catherine's

office. She called out, 'Would you come in here a moment, please?'
The boy looked at her with a frightened expression. 'Yes, ma'am.' He walked in looking as though he expected to be whipped.

'Close the door, please.'
'Yes, ma'am.'
'Take a chair, Atanas. It is Atanas, isn't it?'
'Yes, ma'am.'
She was trying to put him at ease, and was not succeeding.
'There's nothing to be frightened of.'
'No, ma'am.'
Catherine sat there studying him, wondering what terrible things had been done to him to make him so fearful. She decided
she was going to have to try to learn more about his past.
'Atanas, if anyone here gives you any trouble, or is mean to
you, I want you to come to me. Do you understand?'
He swallowed. 'Yes, ma'am.'
But she wondered if he would have nerve enough to come to her. Someone, somewhere, had broken his spirit.
'We'll talk later,' Catherine said.

The resumes of the delegation showed that they had worked in
various divisions of Constantin Demiris' far-flung empire, so
they had all had experience within the organization. The one
who puzzled Catherine the most was the amiable Italian, Dino
Mattusi. He bombarded Catherine with questions to which he should have known the answers, and he did not seem terribly
interested in learning about the London operation. In fact,
he seemed less interested in the company than in Catherine's
personal life.
'Are you married?' Mattusi asked.
'No.'
'But you have been married?'

'Yes.'
'Divorced?'
She wanted to end the conversation. Tm a widow.'
Mattusi grinned at her. 'I'll bet you have a friend. You know
what I mean?'
'I know what you mean,' Catherine said stiffly. And it's none
of your business. "Are you married?'
'Si, si. I have a wife and four beautiful bambini. They miss me
so much when I am away from home.'
'Do you travel a great deal, Mr Mattusi?'
He looked hurt. 'Dino, Dino. Mr Mattusi is my father. Yes,
I travel a great deal.' He smiled at Catherine and lowered his
voice. 'But sometimes travelling can bring some extra pleasures.
You know what I mean?'
Catherine returned his smile. 'No.'

At 12.15 that afternoon, Catherine left to keep her appointment
with Dr Hamilton. To her surprise, she found herself looking
forward to it. She remembered how upset she had been the last
time she had gone to see him. This time, she walked into his
office filled with a sense of anticipation. The receptionist had
gone to lunch and the door to the doctor's office was open. Alan
Hamilton was waiting for her.
'Come in,' he greeted her.
Catherine walked into the office and he indicated a chair.
'Well. Did you have a good week?'
Was it a good week? Not really. She had been unable to get
Kirk Reynolds' death out of her mind. 'It was all right. I -1 keep
busy.'
'That's very helpful. How long have you worked for Constantin
Demiris?'

'Four months.'
'Do you enjoy your work?'
'It keeps my mind off ... off of things. I owe a lot to Mr Demiris. I can't tell you how much he's done for me.' Catherine smiled ruefully. 'But I guess I will, won't I?'
Alan Hamilton shook his head. 'You'll tell me only what you want to tell me.'
There was a silence. She finally broke it. 'My husband used to work for Mr Demiris. He was his pilot. I... I had a boating accident and I lost my memory. When I regained it, Mr Demiris offered me this job.'

I'm leaving out the pain, and the terror. Am I ashamed to tell him my husband tried to murder me? Is it because I'm afraid he'll think me less worthwhile?

'It isn't easy for any of us to talk about our pasts.'

Catherine looked at him, silent.

'You said you lost your memory.'

'Yes.'

'You had a boating accident.'

'Yes.' Catherine's lips were stiff, as though she were determined to tell him as little as possible. She was torn with a terrible conflict. She wanted to tell him everything, and get his help. She wanted to tell him nothing, to be left alone.

Alan Hamilton was studying her thoughtfully. 'Are you divorced?'

Yes. By a firing squad. 'He's . . . My husband died.'

'Miss Alexander . . .' He hesitated. 'Do you mind if I call you
Catherine?'

'No.'

'I'm Alan. Catherine, what are you afraid of?'

She stiffened. 'What makes you think I'm afraid?'

'Aren't you?'

'No.' This time the silence was longer.

She was afraid to put it into words, afraid to bring the reality
out into the open. 'People around me ... seem to die.'

If he was taken aback, he did not show it. 'And you believe
that you're the cause of their deaths?'

'Yes. No. I don't know. I'm . . . confused.'

'We often blame ourselves for things that happen to other people. If a husband and wife get a divorce, the children think
they're responsible. If someone curses a person and that person
dies, he thinks he was the cause of it. That kind of belief is not
at all unusual. You . . .'

'It's more than that.'

'Is it?' He watched her, ready to listen.

The words poured out. 'My husband was killed, and his ...

I

his mistress. The two lawyers who defended them died. And
now . . .' Her voice broke. 'Kirk.'
'And you think you're responsible for all those deaths.
That's
a tremendous burden to carry around, isn't it?'
'I ... I seem to be some kind of bad luck charm. I'm
afraid
to have a relationship with another man. I don't think I
could
stand it if anything . . .'
'Catherine, do you know whose life you're responsible for?
Yours. No one else's. It's impossible for you to control
anyone
else's life and death. You're innocent. You had nothing to
do
with any of those deaths. You must understand that.'
You're innocent. You had nothing to do with any of those
deaths. And Catherine sat there thinking about those
words. She
wanted desperately to believe them. Those people died
because
of their actions, not because of hers. And as for Kirk, it
was an
unfortunate accident. Wasn't it?
Alan Hamilton was quietly watching her. Catherine looked
up and thought, He's a decent man. Another thought came
unbidden into her mind. / wish I had met him earlier.
Guiltily,
Catherine glanced at the framed photograph of Alan's wife
and
child on the coffee table.
'Thank you,' Catherine said. 'I... I'm going to try to
believe
that. I'll have to get used to the idea.'
Alan Hamilton smiled. 'We'll get used to it together. Are
you
coming back?'
'What?'
'This was a trial run, remember? You were going to decide
whether you wanted to go on with this.'
Catherine did not hesitate. 'Yes, I'll be back, Alan.'
When she had gone, Alan Hamilton sat there thinking about

her.
He had treated many attractive patients during the years he
had been practicing, and some of them had indicated a sexual
interest in him. But he was too good a psychiatrist to allow
himself to be tempted. A personal relationship with a patient
was one of the first taboos of his profession. It would have been
a betrayal.

Dr Alan Hamilton came from a medical background. His father
was a surgeon who had married his nurse and Alan's grandfather
had been a famous cardiologist. From the time he was a small
boy, Alan knew that he wanted to be a doctor. A surgeon like
his father. He had attended medical school at King's College,
and after graduation, had gone on to study surgery.
He had a natural flair for it, a skill that could not be taught.
And then, on 1 September 1939, the army of the Third Reich
had marched across the border of Poland, and two days later
Britain and France declared war. The Second World War had
begun.

Alan Hamilton had enlisted as a surgeon.
On 22 June 1940, after the Axis forces had conquered Poland,
Norway, and the Low Countries, France fell, and the brunt of
the war fell on the British Isles.
At first, a hundred planes a day dropped bombs on British
cities. Soon it was two hundred planes, then a thousand. The
carnage was beyond imagination. The wounded and dying were
everywhere. The cities were in flames. But Hitler had badly

misjudged the British. The attacks only served to strengthen
their resolve. They were ready to die for their freedom.
There was no respite day or night, and Alan Hamilton found
himself going without sleep for stretches that sometimes lasted
as long as sixty hours. When the emergency hospital he worked
in was bombed, he moved his patients to a warehouse. He saved
countless lives, working under the most hazardous conditions
possible.
In October, when the bombing was at its height, the air-raid
sirens had sounded, and people were making for the air-raid
shelters below ground. Alan was in the middle of surgery, and
he refused to leave his patient. The bombs were coming closer.
A doctor working with Alan said, 'Let's get the hell out of here.'
'In a minute.' He had the patient's chest open and was removing
bloody pieces of shrapnel.
'Alan!'
But he could not leave. He was concentrating on what he was
doing, oblivious to the sound of the bombs falling all around
him. He never heard the sound of the bomb that fell on the building.

He was in a coma for six days, and when he awakened, he
learned that among his other injuries, the bones of his right hand
had been crushed. They had been set and looked normal, but
he would never operate again.

It took him almost a year to get over the trauma of having his
future destroyed. He was under the care of a psychiatrist, a

no-nonsense doctor who said, 'It's about time you stopped feeling
sorry for yourself and got on with your life.'
'Doing what?' Alan had asked bitterly.
'What you've been doing only
in a different way.'
'I don't understand.'
'You're a healer, Alan. You heal people's bodies. Well, you
can't do that anymore. But it's just as important to heal people's
minds. You'd make a good psychiatrist. You're intelligent and
you have compassion. Think about it.'
It had turned out to be one of the most rewarding decisions
he had ever made. He enjoyed what he was doing tremendously.
In a sense, he found it even more satisfying to bring patients
who were living in despair back to normal, than to minister to
their physical welfare. His reputation had grown quickly, and
for the past three years, he had been forced to turn new patients
away. He had agreed to see Catherine only so that he could
recommend another doctor to her. But something about her had
touched him. / must help her.

When Catherine returned to her office, after her session with
Alan Hamilton, she went in to see Wim.
'I saw Dr Hamilton today,' Catherine said.
'Yeah? In psychiatric social readjustment, the rating scale for
death of a spouse is 100 divorce 73 marital separation from mate
65 detention in jail 63 death of a close family member 63 personal
injury or illness 53 marriage 50 being fired at work 47 . . .'
Catherine stood there listening. What must it be like, she

wondered, to think of things only in mathematical terms? Never
to know another person as a human being, never to have a real
friend. I feel as though I've found a new friend, Catherine
thought.
/ wonder how long he's been married.

Chapter 20

Athens

You tried to destroy me. You failed. I promise you it would have
been better for you if you had succeeded. But first I'm going to
destroy your sister.
Constantin Demiris' words were still ringing in Lambrou's
ears. He had no doubt that Demiris would try to carry out his
threat. What in God's name could have gone wrong with Rizzoli?
Everything had been so carefully planned. But there was no time
to speculate on what had happened. The important thing now
was to warn his sister.
Lambrou's secretary walked into the office. 'Your ten o'clock
appointment is waiting. Shall I send . . . ?'
'No. Cancel all my appointments. I won't be back this morning.'
He picked up a telephone and five minutes later he was on his
way to see Melina.

She was waiting for him in the garden of the villa. 'Spyros. You
sounded so upset on the phone! What's wrong?'
'We have to talk.' He led her to a bench in a vine-covered
gazebo. He sat there looking at her and thought, What a lovely
woman she is. She's always brought happiness to everyone her

life has touched. She's done nothing to deserve this.
'Aren't you going to tell me what's wrong?'
Lambrou took a deep breath. 'This is going to be very painful,
darling.'
'You're beginning to alarm me.'
'I mean to. Your life is in danger.'
'What? In danger from whom?'
He measured his words carefully. 'I think Costa is going to try
to kill you.'
Melina was staring at him, open-mouthed. 'You're joking.'
'No, I mean it, Melina.'
'Darling, Costa is a lot of things, but he's not a murderer. He
couldn't
'You're wrong. He's killed before.'
Her face had gone pale. 'What are you saying?'
'Oh, he doesn't do it with his bare hands. He hires people to
do it for him, but . . .'
'I don't believe you.'
'Do you remember Catherine Douglas?'
'The woman who was murdered . . .'
'She wasn't murdered. She's alive.'
Melina shook her head. 'She she
couldn't be. I mean they executed the people who killed her.'
Lambrou took his sister's hand in his. 'Melina, Larry Douglas
and Noelle Page didn't kill Catherine. All the time the trial was
going on, Demiris had her hidden away.'
Melina sat there stunned, speechless, remembering the woman
she had caught a glimpse of at the house.
Who is the woman I saw in the hall?
She's a friend of a business associate. She's going to work for
me in London.
I caught a glimpse of her. She reminds me of someone. She
reminds me of the wife of the pilot who used to work for you. But
that's impossible, of course. They murdered her.

Yes, they murdered her.
She found her voice. 'I saw her at the house, Spyros. Costa
lied to me about her.'
'He's insane. I want you to pack up and get out of this place.'
She looked at him and said slowly, 'No, this is my home.'
'Melina, I couldn't bear it if anything happened to you.'
There was steel in her voice. 'Don't worry. Nothing will happen to me. Costa is no fool. He knows that if he did anything
to harm me he would have to pay dearly for it.'
'He's your husband, but you don't know him. I'm afraid for you.'
'I can handle Mm, Spyros.'
He looked at her and knew that there was no way he could persuade her to change her mind. 'If you won't leave, do me a
favor. Promise you won't be alone with him.'
She patted her brother's cheek. 'I promise.'
Melina had no intention of keeping that promise.

When Constantin Demiris arrived home that evening, Melina was waiting for him. He nodded to her and walked past her into
his bedroom. Melina followed him.
'I think it's time we had a talk,' Melina said.
Demiris looked at his watch. 'I only have a few minutes. I have an engagement.'
'Have you? Are you planning to murder someone else tonight?'
He turned to her. 'What are you raving about?'
'Spyros came by to see me this morning.'
'I'm going to have to warn your brother to stay away from my
house.'
'It's my house, too,' Melina said defiantly. 'We had a very
interesting chat.'
'Really? About what?'
'About you and Catherine Douglas and Noelle Page.'
She had his full attention now. 'That's ancient history.'
'Is it? Spyros says you sent two innocent people to their deaths,

Costa.'
'Spyros is a fool.'
'I saw the girl here, in this house.'
'No one will believe you. You won't see her again. I've sent
someone to get rid of her.'
And Melina suddenly remembered the three men who had
come to dinner. You'll be flying to London early in the morning.
I'm sure you'll take care of everything that needs to be done.
He moved closer to Melina and said softly, 'You know, I'm
really getting quite fed up with you and your brother.' He took
her arm and squeezed it hard. 'Spyros tried to ruin me. He
should have killed me instead.' He squeezed harder. 'Both of
you are going to wish he had.'
'Stop it, you're hurting me.'
'My dear wife, you don't know what pain is yet. But you will.'
He let go of her arm. 'I'm getting a divorce. I want a real woman.
But I won't be out of your life. Oh, no. I have some wonderful
plans for you and your dear brother. Well, we've had our little
talk. If you'll excuse me, I'll go in and change. It's not polite to
keep a lady waiting.'
He turned and walked into his dressing room. Melina stood
there, her heart pounding. Spyros was right. He's a madman.
She felt completely helpless but she wasn't afraid for her own
life. What do I have to live for? Melina thought bitterly. Her
husband had stripped her of all dignity and brought her down to
his level. She thought of all the times he had humiliated her,
abused her in public. She knew that she was an object of pity
among her friends. No, she was no longer concerned about

herself. I'm ready to die, she thought, but I can't let him harm
Spyros. And yet what could she do to stop him? Spyros was
powerful, but her husband was more powerful. Melina knew
with a terrible certainty that if she let him, her husband would
carry out his threat. / must stop him somehow. But how?
How. . . ?

Chapter 21

The delegation of executives from Athens was keeping Catherine
busy. She set up meetings for them with other company executives
and took them through the London operation. They marvelled
at her efficiency. She was knowledgeable about every
phase of the business, and they were impressed.
Catherine's days were full, and the distractions kept her mind
off her own problems. She got to know each of the men a little
better.

Jerry Haley was the black sheep of his family. His father had
been a wealthy oil man, and his grandfather a respected judge.
By the time Jerry Haley was twenty-one, he had served three
years in juvenile detention centers for auto theft, breaking and
entering, and rape. His family had finally sent him to Europe to
get rid of him. 'But I straightened myself out,' Haley told
Catherine proudly. 'Turned over a whole new leaf.'

Yves Renard was a bitter man. Catherine learned that his parents
had given him up and he had been brought up by distant relatives
who abused him. 'They had a farm near Vichy, and they worked

me like a dog from sun-up to sunset. I escaped from there when
I was fifteen and went to work in Paris.'

The cheerful Italian, Dino Mattusi, was born in Sicily, to middle-class
parents. 'When I was sixteen, I caused a big scandal by
running away with a married woman ten years older than me.
Ah, she was bellissimaS
'What happened?' Catherine asked.
He sighed. "They brought me home and then sent me to Rome
to escape the wrath of the woman's husband.'
Catherine smiled. 'I see. When did you go to work for Mr
Demiris' company?'
He said evasively, 'Later. I did many things first. You know
odd
jobs. Anything to make a living.'
'And then you met your wife?'
He looked into Catherine's eyes and said, 'My wife is not
here.'

He watched her, talked to her, listened to the sound of her voice,
smelled her perfume. He wanted to know everything about her.
He liked the way she moved and he wondered what her body was
like under her dress. He would know soon. Very soon. He could
hardly wait.

Jerry Haley walked into Catherine's office. 'Do you like the
theater, Catherine?'
'Why, yes. I . . .'
'There's a new musical that's opened. Pinion's Rainbow. I'd
like to see it tonight.'
till be happy to arrange a ticket for you.'
'It wouldn't be much fun going alone, would it? Are you free?'
Catherine hesitated. 'Yes.' She found herself staring at his

enormous, restless hands.
'Great! Pick me up at my hotel at seven o'clock.' It was an
order. He turned and walked out of the office.
It was strange, Catherine thought. He seemed so friendly and
open and yet . . .
I straightened myself out. She could not get the image of those
huge hands out of her mind.

Jerry Haley was waiting in the lobby of the Savoy Hotel for
Catherine and they drove to the theater in a company limousine.
'London's a great city,' Jerry Haley said. 'I always enjoy
coming back to it. Have you been here long?'
'A few months.^1
'You from the States originally?'
'Yes. Chicago.'
'Now there's a great town. I've had some good times there.'
Raping women?

1

They arrived at the theater and joined the crowd. The show was
wonderful and the cast excellent, but Catherine was unable to
concentrate. Jerry Haley kept drumming his fingers on the side
11 of the chair, on his lap, on his,knees. He was unable to keep his
ll huge hands still.

/ \ When the play was over, Haley turned to Catherine and said,
(" 'It's such a beautiful night. Why don't we get rid of the car and
I go for a walk in Hyde Park?'
'I have to be at the office early in the morning,' Catherine

said. 'Perhaps some other time.'
Haley studied her, an enigmatic smile on his face. 'Sure,'
he him said. 'There's plenty of time.'

Yves Renard was interested in museums. 'Of course,' the
Frenchman
said to Catherine, 'in Paris we have the greatest museum
in the world. Have you been to the Louvre?'
'No,' Catherine said. 'I've never been to Paris.'
'That's a pity. You should go one day.' But, even as he
said
it, he thought to himself, / know she won't. 'I would like
to see
the museums in London. Perhaps on Saturday we could visit
some of them.'
Catherine had planned to catch up on some of her office
work
on Saturday. But Constantin Demiris had asked her to see
that
the visitors were taken care of.
'All right,' she said. 'Saturday will be fine.'
Catherine was not looking forward to spending a day with
the
Frenchman. He's so bitter. He acts like he's still being
abused.

The day started out pleasantly enough. They went first to
the
British Museum where they wandered through galleries
filled
with magnificent treasures of the past. They saw a copy of
the
Magna Carta, a proclamation signed by Elizabeth I, and
treaties
of battles fought centuries earlier.
Something about Yves Renard was bothering Catherine, and
it was not until they had been at the museum for almost an
hour
that she realized what it was.
They were looking at a case containing a document written
by
Admiral Nelson.
'I think this is one of the most interesting exhibits
here,'

Catherine said. 'This was written just before Admiral Nelson
went into battle. You see, he wasn't sure he had the authority . . .' And she was suddenly conscious of the fact that
Yves Renard was not listening. Realization swept over her: he
had paid almost no attention to any of the displays in the museum. He was not interested. Then why did he tell me he wanted to see museums? Catherine wondered.

They went to the Victoria & Albert Museum next and the experience was repeated. This time, Catherine was watching him
closely. Yves Renard went from room to room paying lip service
to what they were seeing, but his mind was obviously somewhere
else.
When they were finished, Catherine asked, 'Would you like to see Westminster Abbey?'
Yves Renard nodded. 'Yes, of course.'
They walked through the great abbey, stopping to look at the
tombstones of the famous men of history who were buried there,
poets and statesmen and kings.
'Look,' Catherine said, 'this is where Browning is buried.'
Renard glanced down. 'Ah, Browning.' And then he moved on.
Catherine stood there looking after him. What is he looking
for? Why is he wasting this day?

When they were on the way back to the hotel, Yves Renard said, 'Thank you, Miss Alexander. I enjoyed that very much.'
He's lying, Catherine thought. But why?
There's a place that I've heard is very interesting. Stonehenge.
I believe it's on Salisbury Plain.'
'Yes,' Catherine said.
'Why don't we visit it, next Saturday perhaps?'
Catherine wondered whether he would find Stonehenge any

more interesting than the museums. ? 'That would be fine,'
Catherine said.
p

Dino Mattusi was a gourmet. He walked into Catherine's
office
with a guidebook. 'I have a list of the greatest
restaurants in
London here. Interested?'
'Well, I . . .'
'Good! Tonight I am taking you to dine at the Connaught.'
Catherine said, 'Tonight I have to . . .'
'No excuses. I will pick you up at eight o'clock.'
Catherine hesitated 'Very well.'
Mattusi beamed. 'BeneF He leaned forward. 'It is no fun
doing things alone, is it?' His meaning was unmistakable.
But
he's so obvious, Catherine thought, that he's really quite
harmless.

The dinner at the Connaught was delicious. They dined on
Scottish smoked salmon, roast beef and Yorkshire pudding.
Over the salad, Dino Mattusi said, 'I find you
fascinating,
Catherine. I love American women.'
'Oh. Is your wife American?' Catherine asked innocently.
Mattusi shrugged. 'No, she is Italian. But she's very
understanding.'
'That must be nice for you,' Catherine said.
He smiled. 'It is, very nice.'
It was not until they were having dessert that Dino
Mattusi
said, 'Do you like the country? I have a friend who has a
car. I
thought we might go for a drive on Sunday.'
Catherine started to say no, and then she suddenly thought
of
Wim. He seemed so lonely. Perhaps he would enjoy going out
for a drive in the country. 'It sounds like fun,'
Catherine said.
'I promise you it will be interesting.'
'I wonder if I might bring Wim?'
He shook his head. 'It's a small car. I'll make the
arrangements.'

The visitors from Athens were demanding and Catherine found
that she had very little time for herself. Haley, Renard and
Mattusi had had several meetings with Wim Vandeen, and
Catherine was amused at how their attitudes had changed.
'He does all this without a calculator?' Haley marvelled.
'That's right.'
'I've never seen anything like it.'

Catherine was impressed with Atanas Stavich. The young boy
was the hardest worker she had ever seen. He was at the office
when Catherine arrived in the morning, and he was there after
everyone else had left. He was always smiling and eager to please.
He reminded Catherine of a trembling puppy. Somewhere in
his past, someone had badly mistreated him. Catherine resolved
to talk to Alan Hamilton about Atanas. There has to be some
way to build his self-confidence, Catherine thought. I'm sure
Alan could help him.
'You know the boy is in love with you, don't you?' Evelyn
said one day.
'What are you talking about?'
'Atanas. Haven't you seen that adoring look in his eyes? He
follows you round like a lost sheep.'
Catherine laughed. 'You're imagining things.'
On an impulse, Catherine invited Atanas to lunch.

'In in
a restaurant?'
Catherine smiled. 'Yes, of course.'
His face flushed. 'I I
don't know, Miss Alexander.' He
looked down at his ill-fitting clothes. 'You would be ashamed
for people to see «me with you.'
'I don't judge people by their clothes,' Catherine said

firmly. till make a reservation.'
She took Atanas to lunch at Lyons Corner House. He sat across from her, awed by his surroundings. 'I I've never been
in a place like this. It is so beautiful.'
Catherine was touched. 'I want you to order anything you want.'
He studied the menu and shook his head. 'Everything is too expensive.'
Catherine smiled. 'Don't worry about it. You and I are working for a very wealthy man. I'm sure he would want us to have a good lunch.' She did not tell him that she was paying for it.
Atanas ordered a shrimp cocktail and a salad, and a chicken
roast with fried potatoes, and he finished off his lunch with
chocolate cake with ice cream.
Catherine watched him eat in amazement. He had such a small
frame. 'Where do you put it all?'
Atanas said shyly, 'I never gain weight.'
'Do you like London, Atanas?'
He nodded. 'What I've seen of it, I like very much.'
'You worked as an office boy in Athens?'
He nodded. 'For Mr Demiris.' There was a note of bitterness
in his voice.
'Didn't you enjoy it?'
'Forgive me it
is not my place to say it, but I do not think
Mr Demiris is a nice man. I ... I do not like him.' The young
boy glanced around quickly as though he might have been overheard. 'He never
mind.'
Catherine thought it best not to pursue it further. 'What made
you decide to come to London, Atanas?'
Atanas said something so softly that Catherine could not hear
him.

'I beg your pardon?'

'I want to be a doctor.'
She looked at him, curious. 'A doctor?'
'Yes, ma'am. I know it sounds foolish.' He hesitated, then went on. 'My family comes from Macedonia and all my life I have heard stories about the Turks coming into our village and
killing and torturing our people. There were no doctors to help
the wounded. Now, the village is gone and my family was wiped
out. But there are still many wounded people in the world. I
want to help them.' He lowered his eyes, embarrassed. 'You must think I'm crazy.'
'No,' Catherine said quietly. 'I think that's wonderful. So you
came to London to study medicine?'
'Yes, ma'am. I'm going to work days and go to school nights.
I'm going to become a doctor.'
There was a ring of determination in his voice. Catherine nodded. 'I believe you will. You and I are going to talk more
about it. I have a friend who might be able to help you. And I
know a wonderful restaurant where we can have lunch next week.'

At midnight, a bomb exploded in Spyros Lambrou's villa. The
blast tore out the front of the house and killed two servants.
Spyros Lambrou's bedroom was destroyed and the only reason he survived was because at the last moment he and his wife had
changed their plans and decided to attend a dinner party given
by the mayor of Athens.
The following morning, a note was sent to his office reading
'Death to capitalists'. It was signed: The Hellenic Revolutionary
Party.
'Why would they do a thing like this to you?' asked a

horrified
Melina.
'They didn't,' Spyros said bluntly. 'It was Costa.'
'You you
have no proof of that.'
'I don't need any proof. Don't you understand yet what you are married to?'
'I -1 don't know what to think.'
'Melina, as long as that man is alive, we are both in danger.
He will stop at nothing.'
'Can't you go to the police?'
'You said it yourself. I have no proof. They would laugh at
me.' He took her, hands in his. 'I want you to get out of there.
Please. Go as far away as you can.'
She stood there for a long time. When she finally spoke, it
was as though she had reached a decision of great importance.
'All right, Spyros. I will do what I must.'
He hugged her. 'Good. And don't worry. We'll find some way to stop him.'

Melina sat in her bedroom alone during the long afternoon, her
mind trying to take in what was happening. So, her husband had
really meant his threat to destroy her and her brother. She could
not let him go through with it. And if their lives were in danger,
so was the life of Catherine Douglas. She's going to work for
Costa in London. I will warn her, Melina thought. But I must
do more than that. I must destroy Costa. I must stop him from
harming anyone else. But how? And then, the answer came to her. Of course! she thought. It's the only way. Why didn't I think
of it before?

Chapter 22

CONFIDENTIAL FILE

TRANSCRIPT OF SESSION WITH
CATHERINE DOUGLAS

C: I'm sorry I'm late, Alan. There was a last-minute meeting
at the office.
A: No problem. The delegation from Athens is still in London?
C: Yes. They they're
planning to leave at the end of next
week.
A: You sound relieved. Have they been difficult?
C: Not difficult exactly, I just have a ... a strange feeling
about them.
A: Strange?
C: It's hard to explain. I know it sounds silly, but. . . there's
something odd about all of them.
A: Have they done anything to . . . ?
C: No. They just make me uneasy. Last night, I had that
nightmare again.
A: The dream that someone was trying to drown you?
C: Yes. I haven't had that dream in a while. And this time it
was different.
A: In what way?
C: It was more . . . real. And it didn't end where it had ended
before.
A: You went past the point where someone was trying to
drown you?
C: Yes. They were trying to drown me and then suddenly I
was in a safe place.
A: The convent?
C: I'm not sure. It could have been. It was a garden. And a
man came to see me. I think I dreamed something like that
before, but this time 1 could see his face.
A: Did you recognize him?

C: Yes. It was Constantin Demiris.
A: So, in your dream . . .
C: Alan, it wasn't just a dream. It was a real memory. I suddenly remembered that Constantin Demiris gave me the gold pin I have.
A: You believe that your subconscious dredged up something that really happened? You're sure it wasn't . . .
C: I know it. Constantin Demiris gave me that pin at the convent.
A: You said you were rescued from the lake by some nuns who
took you to the convent?
C: That's right.
A: Catherine, did anyone else know you were at the convent?
C: No. I don't think so.
A: Then how could Constantin Demiris have known you were there?
C: I I
don't know. I just know that it happened. I woke up frightened. It was as though the dream were some kind of warning. I feel something terrible is going to happen.
A: Nightmares can have that effect on us. The nightmare is one of man's oldest enemies. The word goes back to the Middle English 'niht' or 'night' and 'mare' or 'goblin'. The
old superstition is that it prefers to ride after four and.
C: You don't think they have any real meaning?
A: Sometimes they do. Coleridge wrote, 'Dreams are
no shadows, but the very substances and calamities of my life.'
C: I'm probably taking all this too seriously. Other than my
crazy dreams, I'm fine. Oh. There's someone I would like to talk to you about, Alan.
A: Yes?
C: His name is Atanas Stavich. He's a young boy who came to
London to study medicine. He's had a rough life. I thought that perhaps one day you could meet him and give him some advice.
A: I would be happy to. Why are you frowning?
C: I just remembered something.

A: Yes?
C: It sounds crazy.
A: Our subconscious doesn't distinguish between crazy and

sane.
C: In my dream, when Mr Demiris handed me the gold pin . . .
A: Yes?
C: I heard a voice say, 'He's going to kill you.'

It must look like an accident. 1 don't want anyone to be able to
identify her body. There were many ways to kill her. He would
have to begin making arrangements. He lay on his bed thinking
about them and found that he was getting an erection. Death
was the ultimate orgasm. Finally, he knew how he was going to
do it. It was so simple. There would be no body left to identify.
Constantin Demiris would be pleased.

Chapter 23

Constantin Demiris' beach house was located three miles north
of Piraeus on an acre of waterfront property. Demiris arrived at
7.00 p.m. He pulled up in the driveway, opened the car door,
and started toward the beach house.
As he reached it, the door was opened by a man he did not recognize.
'Good evening, Mr Demiris.'
Inside, Demiris could see half a dozen police officers.
'What's going on here?' Demiris demanded.
'I'm Police Lieutenant Theophilos. I . . .'
Demiris pushed him aside and walked into the living room. It
was a shambles. A terrible struggle had obviously taken place.
Chairs and tables were overturned. One of Melina's dresses

was lying on the floor, torn. Demiris picked it up and stared at
it.
'Where's my wife? I was supposed to meet her here.'
The police lieutenant said, 'She's not here. We've searched
the house and we've looked up and down the beach. It looks
like the house has been burgled.'
'Well, where's Melina? Did she call you? Was she here?'
'Yes, we think she was here, sir.' He held up a ladies' wristatch.
The crystal had been smashed and the hands had stopped
at three o'clock. 'Is this your wife's watch?'
'It looks like it.'
'On the back is engraved "to Melina with love, Costa".'
'Then it is. It was a birthday present.'
Detective Theophilos pointed to some spots on the rug. 'Those
are bloodstains.' He picked up a knife lying on the floor, careful
not to touch the handle. The blade was covered with blood.
'Have you ever seen this knife before, sir?'
Demiris gave it a brief glance. 'No. Are you saying she's dead?'
'It's certainly a possibility, sir. We found drops of blood on
the sand leading down to the water.'
'My God,' Demiris said.
'Luckily for us, there are some clear fingerprints on the knife.'
Demiris sat down heavily. 'Then you'll catch whoever did it.'
'We will if his fingerprints are on file. There are fingerprints
all over the house. We have to sort them out. If you don't mind
giving us your fingerprints, Mr Demiris, we can eliminate those
right away.'
Demiris hesitated. 'Yes, of course.'
'The sergeant right over there can take care of it.'
Demiris walked over to a uniformed policeman who had a
fingerprint pad. 'If you'll just place your fingers right here,

sir.' A moment later, it was done. 'You understand it's just a
formality.'
'I understand.'
Lieutenant Theophilos handed Demiris a small business card.
'Would you know anything about this, Mr Demiris?'
Demiris looked at the card. It read, 'Katelanos Detective Agency Private
Investigations'. He handed the card back. 'No.
Does it have any significance?'
'I don't know. We're checking into it.'
'Naturally, I want you to do everything you can to find out
who's responsible. And let me know if you get word of my wife.'
Lieutenant Theophilos looked at him and nodded. 'Don't
worry, sir. We will.'

Melina. The golden girl, attractive and bright and amusing. It had
been so wonderful in the beginning. And then she had murdered
their son, and for that there could never be forgiveness . . . only
her death.

The call came in at noon the following day. Constantin Demiris
was in the middle of a conference when his secretary buzzed
him. 'Excuse me, Mr Demiris . . .'
'I told you I didn't want to be disturbed.'
'Yes, sir, but there's an Inspector Lavanos on the phone. He
says it's urgent. Do you want me to tell him to . . . ?'
'No. I'll take it.' Demiris turned to the men sitting around the
conference table. 'Excuse me a moment, gentlemen.' He picked
up the receiver. 'Demiris.'
A voice said, This is Chief Inspector Lavanos, Mr Demiris,
at Central Station. We have some information we think you
might be interested in. I wondered whether it would be

convenient
for you to come down to police headquarters?'
'You have news of my wife?'
'I would prefer not to discuss it over the telephone, if
you
don't mind.'
Demiris hesitated for only a moment. till be right down.'
He
replaced the receiver and turned to the others. 'Something
urgent
has come up. Why don't you go on into the dining room
and discuss my proposal and I'll be back in time to join
you for
lunch.'
There was a general murmur of agreement. Five minutes
later,
Demiris was on his way to police headquarters.

There were half a dozen men waiting for him in the office
of the
Police Commissioner. Demiris recognized the policemen he
had
already seen at the beach house. '. . . and this is
Special Prosecutor
Delma.'
Delma was a short, stocky man, with heavy eyebrows, a
round
face and cynical eyes.
'What's happened?' Demiris demanded. 'Do you have some
news of my wife?'
The Chief Inspector said, 'To be perfectly frank, Mr
Demiris,
we have come across some things that puzzle us. We hoped
you
might be able to help us.'
'I'm afraid there's very little I can do to help you. This
whole
thing is so shocking . . .'
'You had an appointment to meet your wife at the beach
house
around three o'clock yesterday afternoon?'

'What? No. Mrs Demiris telephoned and asked me to meet
her there at seven o'clock.'

Prosecutor Delma said smoothly, 'Now, that's one of the things that's puzzling us. A maid at your home told us that you
telephoned your wife about two o'clock and asked her to go to
the beach house alone and wait for you.'

Demiris frowned. 'She's confused. My wife telephoned me and asked me to meet her there at seven o'clock last night.'

'I see. So the maid was mistaken.'

'Obviously.'

'Do you know what reason your wife might have had for asking you to go to the beach house?'

'I suppose she wanted to try to talk me out of divorcing her.'
'You had told your wife you were going to divorce her?'

'Yes.'

'The maid says she overheard a telephone conversation during
which Mrs Demiris told you she was going to divorce you.'

'I don't give a damn what the maid said. You'll have to take
my word for it.'

'Mr Demiris, do you keep swimming trunks at the beach house?' the Chief Inspector asked.

'At the beach house? No. I gave up swimming in the sea years
ago. I use the pool at the town house.'

The Chief Inspector opened a desk drawer and took out a pair
of swim trunks in a plastic bag. He removed them and held them

up for Demiris to see. 'Are these your trunks, Mr
Demiris?'

'They could be mine, I suppose.'

'They have your initials on them.'

'Yes. I think I recognize them. They are mine.'

'We found them at the bottom of a closet in the beach
house.'

'So? They were probably left there a long time ago.
Why . . . ?'

"They were still wet from sea water. The analysis showed
that
it's the same water that's in front of your beach house.
They are
covered with blood.'

It was getting very hot in the room.

'Then someone else must have put them on,' Demiris said
firmly.
The Special Prosecutor said, 'Why would anyone do that?
That's one of the things bothering us, Mr Demiris.'
The Chief Inspector opened a small envelope on the desk
and
took out a gold button. 'One of my men found this under a
rug
at the beach house. Do you recognize it?'
'No.'
'It came from one of your jackets. We took the liberty of
having a detective go to your home this morning to check
out
your wardrobe. A button was missing from one of your
jackets.
The threads match perfectly. And the jacket came back from
the cleaners just a week ago.'
'I don't
'Mr Demiris, you said you told your wife you wanted a
divorce
and that she was trying to talk you out of it?'

'That's correct.'
The Chief Inspector held up the business card that Demiris had been shown at the beach house the day before. 'One of our
men visited the Katelanos Detective Agency today.'
'I told you -1 never heard of them.'
'Your wife hired them to protect her.'
The news came as a shock. 'Melina? Protect her from what?'
'From you. According to the owner of the agency, your wife was threatening to divorce you, and you told her that if she went
through with it you would kill her. He asked her why she didn't
go to the police for protection, and she said she wanted to keep
the matter private. She didn't want the publicity.'
Demiris rose to his feet. 'I'm not going to stay here and listen
to these lies. There's no . . .'
The Chief Inspector reached into a drawer and took out the bloodstained knife that had been found at the beach house.
'You told the officer at the beach house that you had never
seen this before?'
'That's right.'
'Your fingerprints are on this knife.'
Demiris was staring at the knife. 'My my fingerprints?
There's some mistake. That's impossible!'
His mind was racing. He swiftly ran through the evidence that
was piling up against him: the maid saying that he had called his
wife at two o'clock and told her to come to the beach house
alone ... A pair of his swimming trunks with blood on them
... A button torn from his jacket ... A knife with his fingerprints . . .
'Don't you see, you idiots? It's a frame-up,' he shouted.
'Someone carried those trunks to the beach house, spilled a little
blood on them and on the knife, ripped a button off my jacket
and . . .'

The Special Prosecutor interrupted. 'Mr Demiris, can you explain how your fingerprints got on that knife?'
'I I
don't know . . . Wait. Yes. I remember now. Melina
asked me to cut open a package for her. That must be the knife
she handed me. That's why my fingerprints are on it.'
'I see. What was in the package?'
'I ... I don't know.'
'You don't know what was in the package?'
'No. I just cut the rope around it. She never opened it.'
'Can you explain the bloodstains on the carpet, or in the sand
leading down to the water or . . . ?'
'It's obvious,' Demiris shot back. 'AH Melina had to do was
cut herself a little and then walk out toward the water so you
would think I murdered her. She's trying to get even with me
because I told her I was going to divorce her. Right now, she's
hiding somewhere, laughing, because she thinks you're going to
arrest me. Melina's as alive as I am.'
The Special Prosecutor said gravely, 'I wish that were true,
sir. We pulled her body out of the sea this morning. She had
been stabbed and drowned. I'm placing you under arrest, Mr
Demiris, for the murder of your wife.'

Chapter 24

In the beginning, Melina had had no idea how she was going to
accomplish it. She knew only that her husband intended to
destroy her brother and she could not let that happen. Somehow,
Costa had to be stopped. Her life no longer mattered. Her days
and nights were filled with pain and humiliation. She remembered
how Spyros had tried to warn her against the marriage. You

can't marry Demiris. He's a monster. He'II destroy you. How
right he had been. And she had been too much in love to
listen.
Now her husband had to be destroyed. But how? Think like
Costa. And she had. By morning, Melina had worked out all
the
details. After that, the rest had been simple.
Constantin Demiris was in his study working when Melina
walked in. She was carrying a package tied with a heavy
cord.
She held a large butcher knife in her hand.
'Costa, would you mind cutting this open for me? I can't
seem
to manage it.'
He looked up at her and said impatiently, 'Of course you
can't. Don't you know better than to hold a knife by the
blade?'
He snatched the knife from her and started to cut the
cord.
'Couldn't you have had one of the servants do this?'
Melina did not answer.
Demiris finished cutting the cord. 'There!' He put the
knife
down and Melina carefully picked it up by the blade.
She looked up at him and said, 'Costa, we can't go on this
way. I still love you. You must still feel something for
me. Do
you remember the wonderful times we used to have together?
Do you remember the night of our honeymoon when . . .'
'For Christ's sake,' Demiris snapped. 'Don't you
understand?
It's over. I'm finished with you. Get out of here, you
make me
sick.'
Melina stood there staring at him. Finally, she said
quietly,
'All right. Have it your way.' She turned and left the
room
carrying the knife.
'You forgot your package,' Demiris shouted.
She was gone.

Melina went into her husband's dressing room and opened a
closet door. There were a hundred suits hanging in the

closet
with a special section for sport jackets. She reached for one of
the jackets and tore a gold button from it. She put the button in
her pocket.
Next she opened a drawer and removed a pair of her husband's
bathing trunks with his initials on them. I'm almost ready, Melina
thought.

The Katelanos Detective Agency was located on Sofokleous
Street in a faded old brick building on the corner. Melina was
ushered into the office of the owner of the agency, Mr Katelanos,
a small bald man with a tiny mustache.
'Good morning, Mrs Demiris. And what can I do for you?'
'I need protection.'
'What kind of protection?'
'From my husband.'
Katelanos frowned. He smelled trouble. This was not at all
the kind of case he had anticipated. It would be very unwise to
do anything that might offend a man as powerful as Constantin
Demiris.
'Have you thought of going to the police?' he asked.
'I can't. I don't want any publicity. I want to keep this private.
I told my husband I was going to divorce him, and he threatened
to kill me if I went through with it. That's why I came to you.'
'I see. What exactly is it you wish me to do?'
'I want you to assign some men to protect me.'
Katelanos sat there studying her. She's a beautiful woman,
he thought. Obviously neurotic. It was inconceivable that her
husband would harm her. This was probably some little domestic
spat that would blow over in a few days. But meanwhile, he
would be able to charge her a nice fee. On balance,

Katelanos
decided it was worth the risk.
'All right,' he said. 'I have a good man I can assign to you.
When would you .like him to start?'
'Monday.'
So he was right. There was no urgency.
Melina Demiris rose. 'I will give you a call. Do you have a
business card?'
'Yes, of course.' Katelanos handed her his business card and
ushered her out. She's a good client to have, he thought. Her
name will impress my other clients.

When Melina returned home, she telephoned her brother.
'Spyros, I have some good news.' Her voice was filled with
excitement. 'Costa wants a truce.'
'What? I don't trust him, Melina. It must be some kind of
trick. He . . .'
'No. He means it. He realizes that it's stupid for you two to
be fighting all the time. He wants to have peace in the
family.'
There was a silence. 'I don't know.'
'At least give him a chance. He wants you to meet him at your
lodge at Aero-Corinth at three o'clock this afternoon.'
'That's a four-hour drive. Why can't we meet in town?'
'He didn't say,' Melina told him, 'but if it's going to mean
peace . . .'
'All right. I'll do it. But I'm doing it for you.'
'For us,' Melina said. 'Goodbye, Spyros.'
'Goodbye.'

Melina telephoned Constantin at the office. His voice was
abrupt.
'What is it? I'm busy.'
'I just received a call from Spyros. He wants to make peace
with you.'
There was a short, derisive laugh. till bet he does. When

I'm
through with him he'll have all the peace he'll ever
want.'
'He said he's not going to compete with you anymore,
Costa.
He's willing to sell you his fleet.'
'Sell me his ... Are you sure?' His voice was suddenly
filled
with interest.
'Yes. He said he's had enough.'
'All right. Tell him to send his accountants over to my
office,
and . . .'
'No. He wants to meet with you this afternoon at three
o'clock
at Aero-Corinth.'
'His lodge?'
'Yes. It's a secluded place. It will be just the two of
you. He
doesn't want word of this to get out.'
/'// bet he doesn't, Demiris thought with satisfaction.
When
word does get out, he will be a laughing stock. 'All
right,' Demiris
said. 'You can tell him I'll be there.'

The drive to Aero-Corinth was a long one, on winding roads
that
meandered through the lush countryside, redolent with the
odors of grapes and lemons and hay. Spyros Lambrou passed
ancient
ruins along the way. In the distance, he saw the fallen
pillars of
Eleusis, the ruined altars of lesser gods. He thought of
Demiris.

Lambrou was the first to arrive at the lodge. He pulled up
in
front of the cabin and sat in the car for a moment,
thinking about
the meeting he was about to have. Did Constantin really
want a
truce, or was this another one of his tricks? If anything
happened

to him, at least Melina knew where he had gone. Spyros got out
of the car and walked into the deserted lodge.
The lodge was a lovely old wooden building with a view of Corinth in the distance below. As a boy, Spyros Lambrou had
spent weekends there with his father, hunting small game in the mountains. Now he was after bigger game.

Fifteen minutes later, Constantin Demiris arrived. He saw Spyros inside, waiting there, and it gave him a glow of satisfac-246

impression. So, after all these years, the man is finally willing to admit
he is defeated. He got out of his car and walked into the cabin.
The two men stood there, staring at each other.
'\yell, my dear brother-in-law,' Demiris said, 'so we've finally
reached the end of the road.'
'I want this madness to end, Costa. It's gone too far.'
'I couldn't agree with you more. How many ships do you have,
Spyros?'
Lambrou looked at him in surprise. 'What?'
'How many ships do you have? I'll purchase them all. At a substantial discount, naturally.'
Lambrou could not believe what he was hearing. 'Purchase my ships?'
'I'm willing to buy all of them. It will make me the largest fleet
owner in the world.'
'Are you crazy? What what
makes you think I would sell
you my ships?'
It was Demiris' turn to react. 'That's why we're meeting here,
isn't it?'
'We're meeting here because you asked for a truce.'
Demiris' face darkened. 'I who
told you that?'
'Melina.'
The truth dawned on both of them at the same moment. 'She

told you I wanted a truce?'
'She told you I wanted to sell my ships?'
'The stupid bitch,' Demiris exclaimed. 'I suppose she thought
that by bringing us together we would reach some sort of agreement.
She's a bigger fool than you are, Lambrou. I've wasted a whole afternoon on you.'
Constantin Demiris turned and stormed out the door. Spyros Lambrou looked after him, thinking, Melina shouldn't have lied
to us. She should have known that there's no way her husband
and I could ever get together. Not now. It's too late. It was always
too late.

At 1.30, earlier that afternoon, Melina had rung for the maid.
'Andrea, would you bring me some tea, please?'
'Certainly, ma'am.' The maid left the room and when she returned with the tea tray ten minutes later, her mistress was
speaking into the telephone. Her tone was angry.
'No, Costa, I've made up my mind. I intend to divorce you and I'm going to make it as messy and as public as I can.'
Embarrassed, Andrea set the tray down and started to retreat.
Melina waved to her to stay.
Melina spoke into the dead phone. 'You can threaten me all you like. I'm not going to change my mind . . . Never ... I
don't care what you say . . . You don't frighten me, Costa . . .
No . . . What would be the point? . . . All right. I'll meet you
at the beach house but it won't do you any good. Yes, I'll come
alone. In an hour? Very well.'
Slowly, Melina replaced the receiver, a worried look on her
face. She turned to Andrea. 'I'm going to the beach house to
meet my husband. If I haven't returned by six o'clock, I

want
you to call the police/
Andrea swallowed nervously. 'Would you like the chauffeur
to drive you?'
'No. Mr Demiris asked me to come alone.'
'Yes, ma'am.'

There was one more thing to do. Catherine Alexander's life
was
in danger. She had to be warned. It was someone from the
delegation that had had dinner at the house. You won't see
her
again. I've sent someone to get rid of her. Melina placed
a call to
her husband's offices in London.
'Is there a Catherine Alexander working there?'
'She's not in at the moment. Can anyone else help you?'
Melina hesitated. Her message was too urgent to trust to
just anyone. But she would have no time to call back. She
remembered Costa mentioning a Wim Vandeen, a genius in the
office.
'Could I speak with Mr Vandeen, please?'
'Just a moment.'
A man's voice came on the line. 'Hello.'
She could barely understand him.
'I have a message for Catherine Alexander. It's very
important.
Would you see that she gets it, please?'
'Catherine Alexander.'
'Yes. Tell her tell
her that her life is in danger. Someone is
going to try to kill her. I think it could be one of the
men who
came from Athens.'
'Athens ..."
'Yes.'
'Athens has a population of eight hundred six thousand . .
.'
Melina could not seem to make the man understand. She hung
up the phone. She had tried her best.

Wim sat at his desk, digesting the telephone conversation.
Someone
is going to try to kill Catherine. A hundred and fourteen

murders were committed in England this year, Catherine will
make it a hundred and fifteen. One of the men who came from
Athens. Jerry Haley. Yves Renard. Dino Mattusi. One of them is
going to kill Catherine. Wim's computer mind instantly fed him
all the data on the three men. / think I know which one it is.
When Catherine returned later, Wim said nothing to her about
the phone call.
He was curious to see if he was right.

Catherine was out with a different member of the delegation
every evening, and when she came to work each morning, Wim
p was there, waiting. He seemed disappointed to see her.
When is she going to let him do it? Wim wondered. Maybe he
should tell her about the telephone message. But that would be
cheating. It wouldn't be fair to change the odds.

The drive to the beach house took an hour of actual time and
twenty years of memories. There was so much for Melina to
think about, so much to recall. Costa, young and handsome,
saying, Surely you've been sent from the heavens to teach us
mortals what beauty is. You're beyond flattery. Nothing I could
say would do you justice . . . The wonderful cruises on their
yacht and idyllic vacations on Psara . . . The days of lovely
surprise gifts and the nights of wild love-making. And then the
miscarriage, and the string of mistresses, and the affair with
Noelle Page. And the beatings and public humiliations. Koritsion!
You have nothing to live for, he had said. Why don't you
kill yourself? And, finally, the threat to destroy Spyros.

That was what, in the end, Melina was unable to bear.

When Melina arrived at the beach house, it was deserted. The
sky was cloudy, and there was a chill wind blowing from the
sea. An omen, she thought.
She walked into the comforting, friendly house and looked
around for the last time.
Then she began to overturn furniture and smash lamps. She
ripped off her dress and let it fall to the floor. She took out the
card from the detective agency and placed it on a table. She
lifted the rug and put the gold button under it. Next she took
off the gold wristwatch that Costa had given her and smashed it
against the table.
She picked up her husband's swim trunks that she had taken
from the house and carried them out to the beach. She wet them
in the water, and returned to the house. Finally, there was only
one thing left to do. It's time, she thought. She took a deep
breath and slowly picked up the butcher knife and unwrapped
it, careful not to disturb the tissue paper that covered the handle.
Melina held it in her hand, staring at it. This was the crucial
part. She had to stab herself hard enough to make it look like
murder, and at the same time have enough strength left to carry
out the rest of her plan.
She closed her eyes, and plunged the knife deep into her side.
The pain was excruciating. Blood began to pour out. Melina
held the wet bathing trunks to her side, and when they were
covered with blood she walked over to a closet and shoved them

in the back. She was beginning to feel dizzy. She looked around
to make sure she had not missed anything, then she stumbled
toward the door that led to the beach, her blood staining the
carpet a bright crimson.
She moved toward the ocean. The blood was coming out faster
now, and she thought, I'm not going to make it. Costa is going
to win. I mustn't let him.
The walk to the ocean seemed to take forever. One more
step, she thought. One more step.
She kept walking, fighting the dizziness that engulfed her. Her
vision was beginning to blur. She fell to her knees. I mustn't stop
now. She rose and kept walking until she felt the cold water
lapping at her feet.
When the salt water hit her wound, she screamed aloud with
the unbearable pain. I'm doing it for Spyros, she thought. Dear
Spyros.
In the distance she could see a low cloud hovering over the
horizon. She began to swim toward it, trailing a stream of blood.
And a miracle happened. The cloud came down to her, and
she could feel its white softness enveloping her, bathing her,
caressing her. The pain was gone now, and she felt a wonderful
feeling of peace steal over her.
I'm going home, Melina thought happily. I'm going home at last.

I'm placing you under arrest for the murder of your wife.
After that, everything seemed to happen in slow motion. He
was booked, and fingerprinted again. He had his picture taken,
and was placed in a prison cell. It was unbelievable that they

would dare do this to him.
'Get me Peter Demonides. Tell him I want to see him right now.'
'Mr Demonides has been relieved of his duties. He's under investigation.'
So there was no one to turn to. I'll get out of this, he thought. I'm Constantin Demiris.
He sent for the Special Prosecutor.
Delma arrived at the prison one hour later. 'You asked to see
me?'
'Yes,' Demiris said. 'I understand you've established the time
of my wife's death at three o'clock.'
'That is correct.'
Then before you embarrass yourself and the police department
any further, I can prove that I was nowhere near the beach house at that hour yesterday.'
'You can prove that?'
'Of course. I have a witness.'

They were seated in the Police Commissioner's office when Spyros Lambrou arrived. Demiris' face lit up when he saw him.
'Spyros, thank God you're here! These idiots think I murdered
Melina. You know I couldn't have. Tell them.'
Spyros Lambrou frowned. Tell them what?'
'Melina was killed at three o'clock yesterday afternoon. You

*'
and I were together at Aero-Corinth at three o'clock. I couldn't
have driven back to the beach house before seven. Tell them
about our meeting.'
Spyros Lambrou was staring at him. 'What meeting?'
The blood began to drain from Demiris' face. "The ... the meeting you and I had yesterday. At the lodge at Acrocorinth.'
'You must be confused, Costa. I was out driving alone yesterday

afternoon. I'm not going to lie for you.'
Constantin Demiris' face filled with rage. 'You can't do this!'
He grabbed the lapels of Lambrou's jacket. 'Tell them the truth.'
Spyros Lambrou pushed him away. 'The truth is that my sister
is dead and you murdered her.'
'Liar!' Demiris screamed. 'Liar!' He started toward Lambrou
again and it took two policemen to restrain him.
'You son-of-a-bitch. You kriow I'm innocent!'
'The judges will decide that. I think you need a good lawyer.'
And Constantin Demiris realized that there was only one man
who could have saved him.
Napoleon Chotas.

CONFIDENTIAL FILE

TRANSCRIPT OF SESSION WITH
CATHERINE DOUGLAS

C: Do you believe in premonitions, Alan?
A: They're not scientifically accepted, but as a matter of fact,
I do. Have you been having premonitions?
C: Yes. I I
have the feeling that something terrible is going
to happen to me.
A: Is this part of your old dream?
C: No. I told you that Mr Demiris sent some men in from Athens . . .
A: Yes.
C: He asked me to look after them, so I've been seeing quite
a bit of them.
A: Do you feel threatened by them?
C: No. Not exactly. It's difficult to explain. They haven't done
anything, and yet I -1 keep expecting something to happen.
Something awful. Does that make any sense to you?
A: Tell me about the men.

C: There's a Frenchman, Yves Renard. He insists that we go to museums but when we get there, I can see that he's not interested. He asked me to take him to Stonehenge this Saturday. There's Jerry Haley. He's an American. He seems pleasant enough, but there's something disturbing about him. Then there's Dino Mattusi. He's supposed to be an executive with Mr Demiris' company, but he asks a lot of questions that he should have the answers to. He invited me to go for a drive. I thought I would take Wim along . . .
And that's something else.
A: Yes?
C: Wim has been acting strangely.
A: In what way?
C: When I come into the office in the morning, Wim is always
waiting for me. He never used to. And when he sees me, it's almost as though he's angry that I'm there. None of this
makes much sense, does it?
A: Everything makes sense once you have the key, Catherine.
Have you had any more dreams?
C: I had a dream about Constantin Demiris. It's very vague.
A: Tell me what you remember of it.
C: I asked him why he was being so kind to me, why he gave me the job here and a place to live. And why he gave me the gold pin.

A: And, what did he say?
C: I don't remember. I woke up screaming.

Dr Alan Hamilton studied the transcript carefully, looking for
the unmarked trails of the subconscious, seeking a clue that
would explain what was disturbing Catherine. He was reasonably
certain that her apprehension was connected with the fact that
strangers had arrived from Athens, and Athens was the scene of
her traumatic past. The part about Wim puzzled Alan. Was

Catherine imagining it? Or was Wim behaving in an atypical way? I'm due to see Wim in a few weeks, Alan thought. Perhaps
I will move up his appointment.
Alan sat there thinking about Catherine. Although he made it a rule never to get involved emotionally with his patients
Catherine was someone special. She was beautiful and vulnerable
and . . . What am I doing? I can't let myself think this way. I'll
concentrate on something else. But his thoughts kept returning
to her.

Catherine was unable to get Alan Hamilton out of her mind.
Don't be a fool, Catherine told herself. He's a married man. All
patients feel this way about their analysts. But nothing Catherine
told herself helped. Maybe I should see an analyst about my
analyst.
She was seeing Alan again in two days. Perhaps I should cancel
the appointment, Catherine thought, before 1 get in any deeper.
Too late.

On the morning she had the appointment with Alan, Catherine
dressed very carefully and went to the beauty parlor. As long as
I'm not going to see him again after today, Catherine
reasoned, there's no harm in my looking nice.

The moment she walked into his office, her resolve melted. Why
does he have to be so damned attractive? Why couldn't we have
met before he got married? Why couldn't he have known me when
I was a normal and sane human being? But, on the other hand,

if I were a sane, normal human being, I wouldn't have gone to
him in the first place, would I?
'I beg your pardon?'
Catherine realized she had spoken aloud. Now was the time
to tell him that this was her last visit.
She took a deep breath. 'Alan . . .' And her resolve broke.
She looked over at the photograph on the coffee table. 'How
long have you been married?'
'Married?' He followed Catherine's glance. 'Oh. That's my
sister and her son.'
Catherine felt a wave of joy sweep through her. 'Oh, that's
wonderful! I mean, she . . . she looks wonderful.'
'Are you all right, Catherine?'
Kirk Reynolds had kept asking her that. / wasn't all right
then, Catherine thought, but I am now. 'I'm fine,' Catherine
said.
'You're not married?'
'No.'
Will you have dinner with me? Will you take me to bed? Will
you marry me? If she said any of these things aloud he would
really think she was crazy. Maybe I am.
He was watching her, frowning. 'Catherine, I'm afraid we're
not going to be able to go on with these sessions. Today will be
our last day.'
Catherine's heart sank. 'Why? Have I done something to . . . ?'
'No, it ... it isn't you. In a professional relationship of this
kind, it's improper for a doctor to become emotionally involved
with a patient.'
She was staring at him now, her eyes glowing. 'Are you saying
that you're becoming emotionally involved with me?'
'Yes. And because of that I'm afraid . . .'
'You're absolutely right,' Catherine said happily. 'Let's

talk
about it tonight at dinner.'

They dined at a little Italian restaurant in the heart of Soho. The
food could have been great of terrible, it made no difference.
They were totally absorbed in each other.
'It isn't fair, Alan,' Catherine said. 'You know everything
about me. Tell me about yourself. Weren't you ever married?'
'No. I was engaged to be married.'
'What happened?'
'It was during the war. We were living together in a small flat.
It was during the days of the Blitz. I was working at the hospital
and when I came home one night . . .'
Catherine could hear the pain in his voice.
'. . .the building was gone. There was nothing left.'
She put her hand over his. 'I'm sorry.'
'It took me a long time to get over it. I never met anyone else
that I wanted to marry.' And his eyes said, until now.
They sat there for four hours, talking about everything
the theater, medicine, the state of the world; but the real conversation
was unspoken. It was the electricity building up between
them. They could both feel it. There was a sexual tension
between them that was overwhelming.
Finally, Alan brought up the subject. 'Catherine, what I said
this morning about the doctor-patient relationship . . .'
'Tell me about it at your flat.'

They undressed together, quickly and eagerly, and as Catherine
took off her clothes, she thought of how she had felt when she
was with Kirk Reynolds and how different it was now. The
difference is being in love, Catherine thought. I'm in love with
this man.

She lay on the bed waiting for him and when he came to her
and put his arms around her, all the worries, all the fears of
never being able to relate to a man, vanished. They stroked each
other's bodies, exploring, first tenderly, then fiercely, until their
need became wild and desperate, and they joined together and
Catherine screamed aloud with sheer happiness. I'm whole
again, she thought. Thank you!
They lay there, spent, and Catherine held Alan close in her
arms, never wanting to let him go.
When she could speak again, she said in a shaky voice, 'You
certainly know how to treat a patient, Doctor.'

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Catherine learned about the arrest of Constantin Demiris for
the murder of his wife from the headlines. It came as a complete
shock. When she got to the office, there was a pall over everything.
'Did you hear the news?' Evelyn moaned. 'What are we going to do?'
'We're going to carry on exactly as he would want us to. I'm
sure there's been a big mistake. I'm going to try to telephone
him.'
But Constantin Demiris was unreachable.

Constantin Demiris was the most important prisoner that the
Central Prison of Athens had ever had. The Prosecutor had
issued orders that Demiris be given no special treatment. Demiris
had demanded a number of things: access to telephones, telex

machines and a courier service. His requests were denied.
Demiris spent most of his waking hours, and much of his dreaming ones, trying to figure out who had murdered Melina.
In the beginning, Demiris had assumed that a burglar had been surprised by Melina while ransacking the beach house and
had killed her. But the moment the police had confronted him
with the evidence against him, Demiris had realized that he was
being framed. The question was, by whom? The logical person
was Spyros Lambrou, but the weakness of that theory was that
Lambrou loved his sister more than anyone in the world. He never would have harmed her.
Demiris' suspicions had then turned to the gang that Tony Rizzoli had been involved with. Perhaps they had learned what
he had done to Rizzoli and this was their way of getting revenge.
Constantin Demiris had dismissed that idea out of hand. If the
Mafia had wanted revenge, they would simply have put out a
contract on him.
And so, sitting alone in his cell, Demiris had gone round and
round, trying to solve the puzzle of what had happened. In the
end, when he had exhausted all the possibilities, there was only
one possible conclusion left: Melina had committed suicide. She
had killed herself and framed him for her death. Demiris thought
of what he had done to Noelle Page and Larry Douglas and the
bitter irony was that he was now in exactly the same position in
which they had been. He was going to be tried for a murder he
had not committed.

The jailor was at the cell door. 'Your lawyer is here to
see
you.'
Demiris rose and followed the jailor to a small conference
room. The lawyer was waiting for him. The man's name was
Vassiliki. He was in his fifties, with bushy grey hair and
the
profile of a movie star. He had the reputation of being a
first-rate
criminal attorney. Was that going to be good enough?
The jailor said, 'You have fifteen minutes.' He left the
two of
them alone.
'Well,' Demiris demanded. 'When are you getting me out of
here? What am I paying you for?'
'Mr Demiris, I'm afraid it's not that simple. The Chief
Prosecutor
refuses . . .'
'The Chief Prosecutor is a fool. They can't keep me in
this
place. What about bail? I'll put up any amount they ask.'
Vassiliki licked his lips nervously. 'Bail has been
denied. I've
gone over the evidence that the police have against you,
Mr
Demiris. It's it's
pretty damaging.'
'Damaging or not -1 didn't kill Melina. I'm innocent!'
The attorney swallowed. 'Yes, of course, of course. Do you
to
have
any idea who might have killed your wife?'
'No one. My wife committed suicide.'
The attorney stared at him. 'Excuse me, Mr Demiris, but I
don't think that's going to make a very good defense.
You're
going to have to think of something better than that.'
And with a sinking heart, Demiris knew he was right.
There
was not a jury in the world that would believe his story.

Early the following morning, the attorney visited Demiris
again.

'I'm afraid I have some rather bad news.'
Demiris almost laughed aloud. He was sitting in prison facing
a sentence of death, and this fool was telling him that he had
bad news. What could be worse than the situation he was in?
'Yes?'
'It's about your brother-in-law.'
'Spyros? What about him?'
'I have information that he's gone to the police and told them
that a woman named Catherine Douglas is still alive. I'm not
really familiar with the trial of Noelle Page and Larry Douglas
but . . .'
Constantin Demiris was no longer listening. In all the pressure
of what was happening to him, he had completely forgotten
about Catherine. If they found her, and she talked, they could
implicate him in the deaths of Noelle and Larry. He had already
sent someone to London to take care of her, but now it had
suddenly become urgent.
He leaned forward and clutched the attorney's arm. 'I want
you to send a message to London immediately.'

He read the message twice and felt the beginnings of a sexual
stirring that always happened to him before he took care of a
contract. It was like playing God. He decided who lived and who
died. He was awed by the power he had. But there was a problem.
If he had to do this immediately, there would be no time to work
out his other plan. He would have to improvise something. Make
it look like an accident. Tonight.

CONFIDENTIAL FILE

TRANSCRIPT OF SESSION WITH WIM VANDEEN

A: How are you feeling today?
W: Okay. I came here in a taxi. The driver's name is Ronald
Christie. License plate 30271 taxi certificate number 3070.
On the way here we passed thirty-seven Rovers, a Bentley, ten Jaguars, six Austins, one Rolls-Royce, twenty-seven motorcycles and six bicycles.
A: How are you getting along at the office, Wim?
W: You know.
A: Tell me.
W: I hate the people there.
A: What about Catherine Alexander? . . . Wim, what about Catherine Alexander? . . . Wim?
W: Oh, her. She won't be working there anymore.
A: What do you mean?
W: She's going to be murdered.
A: What? Why do you say that?
W: She told me.
A: Catherine told you she's going to be murdered?
W: The other one.
A: What other one?
W: His wife.
A: Whose wife, Wim?
W: Constantin Demiris.
A: He told you Catherine Alexander was going to be murdered?
W: Mrs Demiris. His wife. She called me from Greece.
A: Who's going to murder Catherine?
W: One of the men.
A: You mean, one of the men who flew in from Athens?
W: Yes.
A: Wim, we're £oing to end this session now. I have to leave.
W: Okay.

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The offices of the Hellenic Trade Corporation closed at 6.00
p.m. A few minutes before six o'clock, Evelyn and the other

employees were preparing to leave.
Evelyn walked into Catherine's office. 'Miracle on Thirty-fourth
Street is playing at the Criterion. It's had great reviews.
Would you like to see it tonight?'
'I can't,' Catherine said. 'Thanks, Evelyn. I promised Jerry
Haley I'd go to the theater with him.'
'They really keep you busy, don't they? All right. Have a good
time.'

Catherine heard the sounds of the others leaving. Finally, there
was silence. She took a last look at her desk, made sure everything
was in order, put on her coat, picked up her purse and
started down the corridor. She had almost reached the front
door when the telephone rang. Catherine hesitated, debating
whether to answer it. She looked at her watch; she was going to
be late. The telephone kept ringing. She ran back to her office
and picked up the phone. 'Hello.'
'Catherine.' It was Alan Hamilton. He sounded out of breath.
'Thank God I reached you.'
'Is something wrong?'
'You're in great danger. I believe someone is trying to kill
you.'
She made a low moaning sound. Her worst nightmares were
coming true. She felt suddenly dizzy. 'Who?'
'I don't know. But I want you to stay where you are.
Don't leave the office. Don't talk to anyone. I'm coming to get
you.'
'Alan, I . . .'
'Don't worry, I'm on my way. Lock yourself in. Everything
will be all right.'
The line went dead.

Catherine slowly replaced the receiver. 'Oh my God!'
Atanas appeared in the doorway. He took one look at Catherine's
pale face and hurried to her side. 'Is something wrong, Miss
Alexander?'
She turned to him. 'Someone . . . someone is trying to kill
me.'
He was gaping at her. 'Why? Who . . . who would want to do that?'
'I'm not sure.'
They heard a knock at the front door.
Atanas looked at Catherine. 'Should I . . . ?'
'No,' she said quickly. 'Don't let anyone in. Dr Hamilton's on
his way here.'
The knock at the front door was repeated, louder.
'You could hide in the basement,' Atanas whispered. 'You'll
be safe there.'
She nodded nervously. 'Right.'
They moved toward the back of the corridor, to the door that
led to the basement. 'When Dr Hamilton comes, tell him where
lam.'
'You won't be afraid down there?'
'No,' Catherine said.
Atanas turned on a light, and led the way down the basement
stairs.
'No one will ever find you here,' Atanas assured her. 'Don't
you have any idea who would want to kill you?'
She thought of Constantin Demiris and her dreams. He's going
to kill you. But that was only a dream. 'I'm not sure.'
Atanas looked at her and whispered, 'I think I know.'
Catherine stared at him. 'Who?'
The.' There was suddenly a switchblade in his hand and he
was holding it to her throat.
'Atanas, this is no time to play . . .'
She felt the knife pressing deeper into her throat.

'Did you ever read Appointment in Samarra, Catherine? No?

Well, it's too late now, isn't it? It's about someone who tried to
escape death. He went to Samarra and death was waiting for
him there. This is your Samarra, Catherine.'
It was obscene, listening to these terrifying words coming from
the mouth of the innocent-looking boy.
'Atanas, please. You can't . . .'
He slapped her hard across the face. 'I can't do it because I'm
a young boy? Did I surprise you? That's because I'm a brilliant
actor. I'm thirty years old, Catherine. Do you know why I look
like a young boy? Because when I was growing up I never had
enough to eat. I lived on garbage that I stole from trash cans at
night.' He was holding the knife at her throat, backing her
toward a wall. 'When I was a young boy, I watched soldiers rape
my mother and father and then slash them both to death, and
then they raped me and left me for dead.'
He was forcing her back deeper into the basement.
'Atanas, I I've
never done anything to hurt you. I. . .'
He smiled his boyish smile. 'This is nothing personal. This is
business. You're worth fifty thousand dollars to me, dead.'
It was as though a curtain had come down in front of her eyes,
and she was seeing everything through a red haze. A part
of her was outside, looking down at what was happening.
'I had a wonderful plan worked out for you. But the boss is
in a hurry now, so we'll have to improvise, won't we?'
Catherine could feel the point of the knife digging hard into
her neck. He moved the knife and slit open the front of

her
dress.
'Pretty,' he said. 'Very pretty. I was planning a party for us
first, but since your doctor friend is coming, we won't have time,
will we? Too bad for you. I'm a great lover.'
Catherine stood there suffocated, barely able to breathe.
Atanas reached into his jacket and took a pint bottle from his
pocket. In it was a pale, pink-colored liquid. 'Have you ever had
slivovic? We'll drink to your accident, huh?' He moved the knife
away to open the bottle and, for an instant, Catherine was tempted to flee.
'Go ahead,' Atanas said softly. 'Try it. Please.'
Catherine licked her lips. 'Look, I... I'll pay you. I'll . . .'
'Save your breath.' Atanas took a deep swallow from .the
bottle and handed it to her. 'Drink,' he said.
'No. I don't . . .'
'Drink!'
Catherine took the bottle and took a small sip. The fierce bite
of the brandy burned her throat. Atanas took the bottle back
and took another deep swallow.
'Who tipped off your doctor friend that someone was going to kill you?'
'I I
don't know.'
'It doesn't matter anyway.' Atanas pointed to one of the thick
wooden posts that supported the ceiling. 'Get over there.'
Catherine's eyes glanced toward the door. She felt the steel
blade press into her neck. 'Don't make me tell you again.'
Catherine moved over to the wooden post.
That's a good girl,' Atanas said. 'Sit down.' He turned away
for an instant. And, in that moment, Catherine made a break
for it.

She started to race toward the stairs, her heart pounding. She
was running for her life. She reached the first step and then the
second, and, as she was about to move up, she felt a hand grab
her leg and pull her back. He was incredibly strong.
'Bitch!'
He grabbed her by the hair and pulled her face close to his.
'You try that again and I'll break both your legs.'
She could feel the knife between her shoulder blades.
'Move!'
Atanas marched her back to the wooden post and shoved her
to the ground.
'Stay there.'

Catherine watched as Atanas walked over to a pile of cardboard
boxes bound with heavy cord. He cut two lengths of cord and
carried them back to her.
Tut both hands in back of the post.'
'No, Atanas. I . . .'
He slammed his fist against the side of her face, and the room

blurred. Atanas leaned close and whispered, 'Don't ever say no
to me. Do what I tell you before I slice your fucking head off.'
Catherine put her hands behind the post and a moment later
she felt the cord bite into her wrists as Atanas tied them together.
She could feel the circulation being cut off.
'Please,' she said. That's too tight.'
'Good,' he grinned. He took the second length of cord and
tied her legs tightly together at the ankles. Then he got to his
feet. 'There we are,' he said. 'All nice and cozy.' He took another
swallow from the bottle. 'Would you like another drink?'
Catherine shook her head.
He shrugged. 'Okay.'

She watched him put the bottle to his lips again. Maybe he'll
get drunk and fall asleep, Catherine thought desperately.
'I used to drink a quart a day,' Atanas boasted. He laid the
empty bottle down on the cement floor. 'Well, time to go to
work.'
'What what
are you going to do?'
Tm going to make a little accident. This is going to be a
masterpiece. I may even charge Demiris double.'
Demiris! So it wasn't just a dream. He was behind this. But
why?
Catherine watched Atanas walk across the room to the huge
boiler. He removed the outside plate and examined the pilot
light and the eight boiler plates that kept the unit hot. The safety
valve was nested in a metal frame to protect it. Atanas picked
up a small piece of wood and jammed it into the frame so that
the safety valve was inoperative. The heat dial was set at 150
degrees. As Catherine watched, Atanas turned the dial up to
the maximum. Satisfied, he walked back to Catherine.
'Do you remember how much trouble we had with that furnace?'
Atanas asked. 'Well, I'm afraid it's going to bust open,
after all.' He moved closer to Catherine. 'When that dial reaches
four hundred degrees, the boiler will blow up. Do you know
what will happen then? The gas lines will rip open and the burner
plates will set them on fire. The whole building will explode like
a bomb.'
'You're insane! There are innocent people out there who . . .'
'There are no innocent people. You Americans believe in
happy endings, don't you? You're fools. There are no happy

endings.' He reached down and tested the rope that held Catherine's
hands behind the post. Her wrists were bleeding. The
rope was cuttinglnto her flesh and the knots were tight. Atanas
slowly ran his hands across Catherine's naked breasts, caressing
them, and then he leaned down and kissed them. 'It's too bad
we don't have more time. You'll never know what you missed.'
He grabbed her by the hair and kissed her on the lips. His breath
reeked of brandy. 'Goodbye, Catherine.' He stood up.
'Don't leave me,' Catherine pleaded. 'Let's talk and . . .'
'I have a plane to catch. I'm going back to Athens.' She
watched him start toward the steps. till leave the light on for
you so you can watch it happen.' A moment later, Catherine
heard the heavy basement door close and the snap of the outside
bolt and then there was silence. She was alone. She looked up
at the dial on the boiler. It was rapidly moving up. As she
watched, it went from 160 degrees to 170 degrees and kept
moving. She fought desperately to free her hands but the more
she pulled, the tighter the bonds became. She looked up again.
The dial had reached 180 degrees and was climbing. There was
no way out.
None.

Alan Hamilton was driving down Wimpole Street like a madman,
cutting in and out of traffic, ignoring the yells and blaring of
horns from irate drivers. The way ahead was blocked. He turned
left and into Portland Place and headed toward Oxford Circus.

Traffic was heavier here, slowing him down.

In the basement at 217 Bond Street, the needle on the boiler
had climbed to 200 degrees. The basement was becoming warm.

The traffic was almost at a standstill. People were headed home,
to dinner, to the theater. Alan Hamilton sat at the wheel of his
car, frustrated. Should I have called the police? But what good
would it have done? A neurotic patient of mine thinks someone
is going to be murdered? The police would have laughed. No, I
have to get to her. The traffic began to move again.

In the basement, the needle was climbing upward to 300. The
room was becoming unbearably hot. She tried to free her hands
again and her wrists were rubbed raw, but the rope stayed tight.

He turned into Oxford Street, speeding through a pedestrian
lane with two old women crossing. In back of him, he heard a
shrill police whistle. For an instant, he was tempted to stop and
enlist help. But there was no time to explain. He kept driving.
At an intersection a huge truck pulled out, blocking his way.
Alan Hamilton honked impatiently. He leaned his head out the
window. 'Move it!'
The truck driver turned to look at him. 'What's the matter,
mate, you going to a fire?'
The traffic had become a snarl of cars. When it finally cleared,

Alan Hamilton started to drive again, racing toward Bond Street.
A trip that should have taken ten minutes had taken him almost
half an hour.

In the basement, the needle climbed to 400 degrees.

Finally, blessedly, the building was in sight. Alan Hamilton
pulled his car over to the curb across the street and slammed on
the brakes. He threw open the door and hurried out of the car.
As he started to run toward the building, he stopped in horror.
The ground shook as the entire building exploded like a giant
bomb, filling the air with flame and debris.
And death.

Chapter 31

Atanas Stavich was feeling terribly aroused. Taking care of a
contract always did that to him. He made it a rule to have sex
with his victims, male or female, before he killed them and he
always found it exciting. Now, he was frustrated because there
had been no time to torture Catherine or to make love to her.
Atanas looked at his watch. It was still early. His plane didn't
leave until eleven o'clock that evening. He took a taxi to
Shepherd Market, paid the driver and wandered into the labyrinth
of streets. There were half a dozen girls standing on street
corners calling out to the men passing by.
'Hello, love, would you like a French lesson tonight?'
'How about a little party?'
'Are you interested in Greek?'

None of the women approached Atanas. He walked up to a
tall
blonde wearing a brief leather skirt and blouse and
stiletto-heeled
shoes.
'Good evening,' Atanas said politely.
She looked down at him, amused. 'Hello, little boy. Does
your mother know you're out?'

Atanas smiled shyly. 'Yes, ma'am. I thought if you weren't
busy . . .'
The prostitute laughed. 'Did you, now? And what would
you do if I wasn't busy? Have you ever made love to a girl
before?'
'Once,' Atanas said softly. 'I liked it.'
'You're the size of a minnow,' the girl laughed. 'I
usually
throw the little ones back, but it's a slow night. Have
you got
ten bob?'
'Yes, ma'am.'
'All right, love. Let's go upstairs.'
She led Atanas through a doorway and up two flights of
stairs
to a small, one-room apartment.
Atanas handed her the money.
'Well, let's see if you know what to do with it, love.'
She
stripped off her clothes and watched Atanas undress. She
looked
at him in astonishment. 'My God! You're enormous.'
'Am I?'
She got into bed and said, 'Be careful. Don't hurt me.'
Atanas moved toward the bed. Ordinarily, he enjoyed
beating
up whores. It increased his sexual satisfaction. But he
knew that
this was no time to do anything suspicious or to leave a
trail that
the police might want to follow. So Atanas smiled down at
her
and said, 'This is your lucky night.'
'What?'
'Nothing.' He climbed on top of her and closed his eyes

and
plunged into her, hurting her, and it was Catherine screaming
for mercy, begging him to stop. And he pounded her savagely,
harder and harder, her screams exciting him until finally everything
exploded and he sank back satisfied.
'My God,' the woman said. 'You're unbelievable.'
Atanas opened his eyes and he wasn't with Catherine. He
was with some ugly whore in a dreary room. He got dressed and
took a taxi to his hotel room, where he packed and checked out.
When he headed for the airport, it was nine thirty. He had
plenty of time to catch his plane.

There was a small line at Olympic Airways. When Atanas
reached the head of the line, he handed the clerk his ticket. 'Is
the flight on time?'
'Yes.' The clerk looked at the name on the ticket, Atanas
Stavich. He looked up at Atanas again, then glanced at a man
standing nearby and nodded. The man walked over to the ticket
counter.
'May I see your ticket?'
Atanas handed him the ticket. 'Is anything wrong?' he asked.
The man said, 'I'm afraid we've overbooked this flight. If
^ you'd like to come into the office, I'll try to straighten everything
out.'
Atanas shrugged. 'All right.' He followed the man toward the
office, filled with a feeling of euphoria. Demiris was probably
out of jail by now.vHe was too important a man for the law to
touch him. Everything had gone perfectly. He would take the
fifty thousand dollars and put it into one of his Swiss numbered

accounts. Then a little vacation. The Riviera, perhaps, or
Rio.
He liked the male prostitutes in Rio.
Atanas walked into the office, and stopped, staring. He
turned
pale. 'You're dead! You're dead! I killed you!' It was a
scream.
| , Atanas was still screaming when they led him out of
the room
|! and into a police van. They watched him leave, and Alan
a Hamilton turned to Catherine. 'It's over now, darling.
It's finally
they
1, over.

In the basement, several hours earlier, Catherine had
tried
desperately to free her hands. The more she struggled, the
tighter
the rope became. Her fingers were getting numb. She kept
looking over at the dial on the boiler. The needle had
reached
250 degrees. When that dial reaches 400 degrees, the
boiler will
explode. There has to be a way out of this, Catherine
thought. There has to be! Her eyes lit on the brandy bottle
that Atanas
had dropped on the floor. She stared at it and her heart
began to
pound wildly. There is a chance! If only she could . . .
Catherine
slumped down against the post and stretched out her feet
toward
the bottle. It was out of reach. She slid down farther,
the splinters
of the wooden post tearing into her back. The bottle was
an inch
away. Catherine's eyes filled with tears. One more try,
she
thought. Just one more. She slumped down farther, her back
raked with splinters, and pushed again, with all her
strength.
One foot touched the bottle. Careful. Don't push it away.
Slowly,

slowly, she hooked the neck of the bottle on the rope that bound
her ankles. Very carefully, she pulled her feet in, drawing the
bottle closer. Finally, it was next to her.
She looked up at the dial. It had climbed to 280 degrees. She
was fighting panic. Slowly, she inched the bottle in back of her
with her feet. Her fingers found it but they were too numb to
get a grip on it, and they were slippery with the blood from her
wrists where the rope had cut into them.
The basement was getting hotter. She tried again. The bottle
slipped away. Catherine glanced at the dial on the boiler.
300 now, and the dial seemed to be racing upward. Steam was
beginning to pour out of the boiler. She tried again to get a grip
on the bottle.
There! She had the bottle in her bound hands. Holding it
tightly, she raised her arms and slid them down the post, smashing
the glass bottle down against the concrete. Nothing happened.
She cried aloud with frustration. She tried it again.
Nothing. The dial was climbing inexorably upward. 350! Catherine
took another deep breath and slammed the bottle down
~with all her strength. She heard the bottle shatter.
Thank God! Moving as quickly as she dared, Catherine gripped the broken
neck of the bottle in one hand and started to saw at the ropes
with the other. The glass cut into her wrists but she ignored the
pain. She felt one strand snap and then another. And suddenly
her hand was free. She hurriedly loosened the rope on the other
hand and untied the ropes binding her ankles. The dial had
reached 380. Heavy jets of steam were pouring out of the furnace.

Catherine struggled to her feet. Atanas had bolted the basement
door. There would be no time to escape from the building before
the explosion.
Catherine raced over to the furnace and tugged at the block
of wood cutting off the safety valve. It was jammed in tightly. 400!
She had a split-second decision to make. She ran for the far
door that led to the bomb shelter, pulled it open and hurried
inside. She slammed the heavy door closed behind her. She lay
huddled on the concrete of the huge bunker, breathing hard,
and five seconds later there was a tremendous explosion and the
whole room seemed to rock. She lay in the darkness, fighting
for breath, listening to the roaring flames outside the door. She
was safe. It was over. No, not yet, Catherine thought. There's
still something I have to do.

When the firemen found her an hour later and escorted her out,
Alan Hamilton was there. Catherine ran into his arms and he
held her close.
'Catherine, darling. I was so afraid! How did you . . . ?'
'Later,' Catherine said. 'We've got to stop Atanas Stavich.'

They were married at a church near Alan's sister's farm in Sussex
in a private ceremony. Alan's sister turned out to be a pleasant
woman who looked exactly like the photograph Catherine had
seen in Alan's office. Her son was away at school. Catherine and
Alan spent a quiet weekend at the farm and flew to Venice

on
their honeymoon.

Venice was a brilliantly colored page out of a medieval history
book, a magical floating city of canals and 120 islands, spanned
by four hundred bridges. Alan and Catherine Hamilton landed
at Venice's Aeroporto Marco Polo, near Mestre, took a motor
launch to the terminal at the Piazza San Marco, and checked
into the Royal Danieli, the beautiful old hotel next to the Doges'
Palace.
Their suite was exquisite, filled with lovely, antique furniture,
and it overlooked the Grand Canal.
'What would you like to do first?' Alan asked.
Catherine walked up to him and put her arms around him.
'Guess.'
They unpacked later.

Venice was a healing, a balm that made Catherine forget the
terrible nightmares and horrors of the past.
She and Alan went exploring. St Mark's Square was a few
hundred yards away from their hotel, and centuries away in
time.
St Mark's Cathedral was an art gallery and a church, the walls
and ceilings lined with breathtaking mosaics and frescoes.
They went inside the Doges' Palace, filled with opulent
chambers, and stood on the Bridge of Sighs, where, centuries
earlier, prisoners had crossed to go to their deaths.
They visited museums and churches and some of the outlying
islands. They stopped at Murano to watch the glass-blowing, and
at Burano to see the women make lace. They took a motor
launch to Torcello and dined at Locanda Cipriani in the lovely
flower-filled garden.

And Catherine was reminded of the garden at the convent, and she remembered how lost she had been then. And she looked across the table at her beloved Alan and thought, Thank
you, God.

Mercerie was the main shopping street, and they found fabulous
stores: Rubelli for fabrics, and Casella for shoes, and Giocondo
Cassini for antiques. They dined at Quadri and Al Graspo de
Ua and Harry's Bar. They rode in gondolas and in the smaller sandoli.

On Friday, near the end of their stay, there was a sudden downpour and a violent electrical storm.
Catherine and Alan raced to get back to the shelter of their
hotel. They looked out the window at the storm.
'Sorry about the rain, Mrs Hamilton,' Alan said. 'The brochures
promised sunshine.'
Catherine smiled. 'What rain? I'm so happy, darling.'
Streaks of lightning flashed across the sky and there was an
explosion of thunder. Another sound flashed into Catherine's
mind: the explosion of the boiler.
She turned to Alan. 'Isn't this the day the jury brings in its
verdict?'
He hesitated. 'Yes. I didn't bring it up because
'I'm all right. I want to know.'
He looked at her a moment, then nodded. 'Right.'
Catherine watched as Alan walked over to the radio in the corner and turned it on. He turned the dial until he came to the
BBC station that was reporting the news.
'. . . and the Prime Minister handed in his resignation today.
The Premier will try to form a new government.' The radio was
crackling and the voice was fading in and out.

'It's that damned electrical storm,' Alan said.
The sound came on again. 'In Athens, the trial of
Constantin
Demiris has finally come to an end, and the jury returned
its verdict a few moments ago. To everyone's surprise, the
verdict . . .'
The radio went dead.
Catherine turned to Alan. 'What what
do you think the
verdict was?'
He took her into his arms. 'It depends on whether you
believe
in happy endings.'

Epilogue

Five days before the trial of Constantin Demiris was to
begin,
the jailor opened up his cell door.
'You have a visitor.'
Constantin Demiris looked up. Except for his attorney, he
had been permitted no visitors until now. He refused to
show
any curiosity. The bastards were treating him like a
common
criminal. But he would not give them the satisfaction of
showing
any emotion. He followed the jailor down the hall into a
small
conference room.
'In there.'
Demiris stepped inside and stopped. A crippled old man was
hunched over in a wheelchair. His hair was snow white. His
face
was a ghastly patchwork of red and white burn tissue. His
lips
were frozen upward in a horrible rictus of a smile. It
took a
moment for him to realize who his visitor was. His face
turned
ashen. 'My God!'
'I'm not a ghost,' Napoleon Chotas said. His voice was
hoarse.
'Come in, Costa.'

Demiris found his voice. 'The fire . . .'
'I jumped out a window and broke my back. My butler got me away before the firemen arrived. I didn't want you to know
I was still alive. I was too tired to fight you any longer.'
'But. . . they found a body.'
'My houseman.'
Demiris sank into a chair. 'I ... I'm glad you're alive,' he
said feebly.
'You should be. I'm going to save your life.'
Demiris studied him warily. 'You are?'
'Yes. I'm going to defend you.'
Demiris laughed aloud. 'Really, Leon. After all these years,
do you take me for a fool? What makes you think I would put
my life in your hands?'
'Because I'm the only one who can save you, Costa.'
Constantin Demiris rose. 'No thanks.' He started toward the
door.
'I've talked to Spyros Lambrou. I've persuaded him to testify
that he was with you at the time his sister was murdered.'
Demiris stopped and turned. 'Why would he do that?'
Chotas leaned forward in his wheelchair. 'Because I persuaded
him that taking your fortune would be a sweeter revenge than
taking your life.'
'I don't understand.'
'I assured Lambrou that if he testifies for you, you'll turn
over your entire fortune to him. Your ships, your companies verything
you possess.'
'You're crazy!'
'Am I? Think about it, Costa. His testimony can save your
life. Is your fortune worth more to you than your life?'
There was a long silence. Demiris sat down again. 'Lambrou
is willing to testify that I was with him when Melina was
killed?'

"That's right.'
'And in return he wants '
'Everything you have.'
Demiris shook his head. 'I would have to keep my . . .'
'Everything. He wants to strip you completely. You see, that's
his revenge.'
There was something that puzzled Demiris. 'And what do you get out of all this, Leon?' He studied Chotas warily.
Chotas' lips moved in a parody of a grin. 'I get it all.'
'I ... I don't understand.'
'Before you turn the Hellenic Trade Corporation over to Lambrou, you're going to transfer all of its assets into a new
company. A company that belongs to me.'
Demiris stared at him. 'So, Lambrou gets nothing.'
Chotas shrugged. 'There are winners and there are losers.'
'Won't Lambrou suspect something?'
'Not the way I'll handle it.'
Demiris said, 'If you'd double-cross Lambrou, how do I know
you won't double-cross me?'
'It's very simple, my dear Costa. You're protected. We'll have
a signed agreement that the new company will belong to me only
on the condition that you are acquitted. If you are found guilty,
I get nothing.'

For the first time, Constantin Demiris found himself becoming
interested. He sat there studying the crippled lawyer. Would he
throw the trial and lose hundreds of millions of dollars just to get
even with me? No. He's not that big a fool. 'All right,' Demiris
said slowly. 'I agree.'
Chotas said, 'Good. You just saved your life, Costa.'
I've saved more than that, Demiris thought triumphantly. /
have a hundred million dollars hidden away where no one will
ever find it.

Chotas' meeting with Spyros Lambrou had been a difficult one.
He almost threw Chotas out of his office.
'You want me to testify to save that monster's life? Get the
hell out of here.'
'You want revenge, don't you?' Chotas had asked.
'Yes. And I'm getting it.'
'Are you? You know Costa. His wealth means more to him than his life. If they execute him, his pain will be over in a few
minutes, but if you break him and take everything away from
him, force him to go through life without any money, you would
be giving him a much greater punishment.'
There was truth in what the lawyer said. Demiris was the greediest man he had ever met. 'You say that he's willing to sign
everything he has over to me?'
'Everything. His fleet, his businesses, every company he owns.'
It was an enormous temptation. 'Let me think about it.'
Lambrou watched the lawyer wheel himself out of his office. Poor bastard, he thought. What has he got to live for?

At midnight, Spyros Lambrou telephoned Napoleon Chotas.
'I've made up my mind. We have a deal.'

The press was in a feeding frenzy. Not only was Constantin Demiris being tried for the murder of his wife, but he was being
defended by a man who had come back from the dead, the brilliant criminal attorney who had supposedly died in a holocaust.

The trial was being held in the same courtroom where Noelle Page and Larry Douglas had been tried. Constantin Demiris sat at the defendant's table, cloaked in an aura of
invisibility. Napoleon Chotas was next to him in his wheelchair.
The State was being represented by Special Prosecutor

Delma.
Delma was addressing the jury.
'Constantin Demiris is one of the most powerful men in
the world. His vast fortune gives him many privileges. But
there's one privilege it does not give him. And that's the
right to
commit cold-blooded murder. No one has that right.' He
turned
to look at Demiris. The State will prove beyond a doubt
that
Constantin Demiris is guilty of the brutal murder of a
wife
who loved him. When you are through hearing the evidence,
I'm certain that there's only one verdict you can bring
in.
Guilty of murder in the first degree.' He walked back to
his
seat.
The Chief Justice turned to Napoleon Chotas. 'Is the
defense
ready to make its opening statement?'
'We are, Your Honor.' Chotas wheeled himself in front of
the
jury. He could see the look of pity on their faces as they
tried
to avoid looking at his grotesque face and his crippled
body.
'Constantin Demiris is not on trial here because he's rich
or
powerful. Or perhaps it's because of that that he has been
dragged into this courtroom. The weak always try to bring
down the powerful, don't they? Mr Demiris may be guilty
of being rich and powerful but one thing I am going to
prove
with absolute certainty he
is not guilty of murdering his wife.'
The trial had begun.

Prosecutor Delnja was questioning Police Lieutenant
Theophilos
on the stand.
'Would you describe what you saw when you walked into
Demiris' beach house, Lieutenant?'
'The chairs and tables were overturned. Everything was all

messed up.'
'It looked as though a terrible struggle had taken place?'
'Yes, sir. It looked as though the house had been
burgled.'
'You found a bloody knife at the scene of the crime, did
you
not?'
'Yes, sir.'
'And there were fingerprints on the knife?'
'That's correct.'
'Who did they belong to?'
'Constantin Demiris.'
The eyes of the jury swung toward Demiris.
'When you searched the house, what else did you find?'
'In back of a closet we found a pair of bloodstained
bathing
shorts that had Demiris' initials on them.'
'Isn't it possible that they had been at the house for a
long
time?'
'No, sir. They were still wet with sea water.'
'Thank you.'
It was Napoleon Chotas' turn. 'Detective Theophilos, you
had
a chance to talk to the defendant personally, didn't you?'
'Yes, sir.'
'How would you describe him physically?'
'Well . . .' The detective looked over to where Demiris
was
sitting. 'I would say he was a big man.'
'Did he look strong? I mean physically strong?'
'Yes.'
'Not the sort of man who would have to tear a room apart
in
order to kill his wife.'
Delma was on his feet. 'Objection.'
'Sustained. The defense attorney will refrain from
leading the
witness.'
'I apologize, Your Honor.' Chotas turned to the detective.
'In
your conversation with Mr Demiris, would you evaluate him
as
an intelligent man?'

'Yes, sir. I don't think you become as rich as he is
unless
you're pretty smart.'
'I couldn't agree with you more, Lieutenant. And that
leads
us to an interesting question. How could a man like
Constantin
Demiris be stupid enough to commit a murder and leave
behind
at the scene of the crime a knife with his fingerprints on
it, a
bloodstained pair of shorts . . . wouldn't you say that
was not
very intelligent?'
'Well, sometimes in the heat of committing a crime, people
do strange things.'
'The police found a gold button from a jacket Demiris was
supposed to be wearing. Is that correct?'
'Yes, sir.'
'And that's an important part of the evidence against Mr
Demiris. The police theory is that his wife tore it off in
the
struggle when he tried to kill her?'
"That's correct.'
'So, we have a man who habitually dressed very neatly. A
button
is ripped off the front of his jacket but he doesn't
notice it. He
wears the jacket home and he still doesn't notice it. Then
he takes
it off and hangs it up in his closet and
he still doesn't notice it.
That would make the defendant not only stupid, but blind.'

Mr Katelanos was on the stand. The owner of the detective
agency was making the most of his moment in the sun. Delma
was questioning him.
'You're the owner of a private detective agency?'
'Yes, sir.'
'And a few days before Mrs Demiris was murdered, she came
to see you?'
'That's right.'
'What did she want?'
'Protection. She said she was going to divorce her

husband
and he had threatened to kill her.'
There was a murmur from the spectators.
'So, Mrs Demiris was very upset?'
'Oh, yes, sir. She certainly was.'
'And she engaged your agency to protect her from her husband?'
'Yes, sir.'
'That's all, thank you.' Delma turned to Chotas. 'Your witness.'
him» Chotas wheeled his chair over to the witness stand. 'Mr Katlanos,
how long have you been in the detective business?'
'Almost fifteen years.'
Chotas was impressed. 'Well. That's a long time. You really
must be very good at what you do.'
'I suppose I am,' Katelanos said modestly.
'So, you've had a lot of experience in dealing with people who
are in trouble.'
"That's why they come to me,' Katelanos said smugly.
'And when Mrs Demiris came to you, did she seem a little bit
upset, or . . .'
'Oh no. She was very upset. You might say panicky.'
'I see. Because she was afraid her husband was about to kill
her.'
'That's right.'
'So, when she left your office, how many of your operatives
did you send with her? One? Two?'
'Well, no. I didn't send any with her.'
Chotas frowned. 'I don't understand. Why not?'
'Well, she said she didn't want us to start until Monday.'
Chotas looked at him, baffled. 'I'm afraid you're confusing
me, Mr Katelanos. This woman, who came to your office terrified
that her husband was going to kill her, just walked out and said
she wouldn't need any protection until Monday?'
'Well, yes. That's right.'

Napoleon Chotas said, almost to himself, 'It makes one wonder
how frightened Mrs Demiris really was, doesn't it?'
*

The Demiris maid was on the witness stand. 'Now, you actually
heard a conversation between Mrs Demiris and her husband on
the telephone?'
'Yes, sir.'
'Would you tell us what that conversation was?'
'Well, Mrs Demiris told her husband she wanted a divorce
and he said he wouldn't give it to her.'
Delma glanced at the jury. 'I see.' He turned back to the
witness. 'What else did you hear?'
'He asked her to meet him at the beach house at three o'clock,
and to go alone.'
'He said that she should come alone?'
'Yes, sir. And she said if she didn't get back by six, I was to
call the police.'
There was a visible reaction from the jury. They turned to
stare at Demiris.
'No more questions.' Delma turned to Chotas. 'Your
witness.'
Napoleon Chotas wheeled his chair close to the witness
stand.
'Your name is Andrea, isn't it?'
'Yes, sir.' She tried not to look at the scarred,
disfigured face.
'Andrea, you said that you heard Mrs Demiris tell her husband
that she was going to get a divorce and that you heard Mr
Demiris say that he wouldn't give it to her, and that he told her
to come to the beach house at three and to come alone. Is that
right?'
'Yes, sir.'
'You are under oath, Andrea. That's not what you heard at
all.'
'Oh yes it is, sir.'

'How many telephones are there in the room where this
conversation took place?'
'Why, just one.'
Napoleon Chotas wheeled his chair closer. 'So, you weren't
listening to the conversation on another phone?'
'No, sir. I would never do that.'
'So, the truth is, you only heard what Mrs Demiris said.
It
would have been impossible for you to hear what her
husband
said.'

'Oh. Well, I suppose . . .'
'In other words, you did not hear Mr Demiris threaten his
wife
or ask her to come to the beach house or anything else.
You imagined all that because of what Mrs Demiris was
saying.'
Andrea was flustered. 'Well, I suppose you could put it
that
way.'
'I am putting it that way. Why were you in the room when
Mrs Demiris was on the telephone?'
'She asked me to bring her some tea.'
'And you brought it?'
'Yes, sir.'
'You set it down on a table?'
'Yes, sir.'
'Why didn't you leave then?'
'Mrs Demiris waved for me to stay.'
'She wanted you to hear the 'conversation or what was
supposed
to be a conversation?'
'I... I suppose so.'
His voice was a whiplash. 'So, you don't know whether she
was
talking to her husband on the phone or if in fact she was
talking to
anybody.' Chotas moved his chair even closer. 'Don't you
find it
strange that in the middle of a personal conversation, Mrs
Demiris
asked you to stay there and listen? I know that in my
house if we're

having a personal discussion we don't ask the staff to
eavesdrop.
No. I put it to you that that conversation never took
place. Mrs
Demiris wasn't speaking to anyone. She was setting up her
husband
so that on this day, in this courtroom, he would be put on
trial for his life. But Constantin Demiris did not kill
his wife. The
evidence against him was very carefully planted. It was
planted
too carefully. No intelligent man would leave a series of
obvious
clues behind that pointed to himself. And no matter what
else he
is, Constantin Demiris is an intelligent man.'

The trial went on for ten more days with accusations and
counter-accusations, and expert testimony from the police
and
the coroner. The consensus of opinion was that Constantin
Demiris was probably guilty.
Napoleon Chotas saved his bombshell until the end. He put
Spyros Lambrou on the witness stand. Before the trial
started,
Demiris had signed a notarized contract deeding the
Hellenic
Trade Corporation and all its assets to Spyros Lambrou. A
day
earlier, those assets had been secretly transferred to
Napoleon
Chotas with the proviso that it would take effect only if
Constan-tin
Demiris was acquitted in his trial.
'Mr Lambrou. You and your brother-in-law, Constantin
Demiris, did not get along well, did you?'
'No, we did not.'
'As a matter of fact, would it be a fair statement to say
that
you hated each other?'
Lambrou looked over at Constantin Demiris. 'It might even
be an understatement.'
'On the day your sister disappeared, Constantin Demiris
told

the police that he was nowhere near the beach house; that in
fact at three o'clock, the time established for your sister's death,
he was having a meeting with you in Aero-Corinth. When the
police questioned you about that meeting, you denied it.'
'Yes, I did.'
'Why?'
Lambrou sat there for a long moment. His voice was filled
with anger. 'Demiris treated my sister shamefully. He constantly
abused and humiliated her. I wanted him punished. He needed
me for an alibi. I wouldn't give it to him.'
'And now?'
'I can't live with a lie any longer. I feel I have to tell
the truth.'
'Did you and Constantin Demiris meet at Aero-Corinth that
afternoon?'
'Yes, the truth is that we did.'
There was an uproar in the courtroom. Delma rose to his feet,
his face pale. 'Your Honor. I object . . .'
'Objection denied.'
Delma sank back into his seat. Constantin Demiris was leaning
forward, his eyes bright.
'Tell us about that meeting. Was it your idea?'
'No. It was Melina's idea. She tricked us both.'
Tricked you, how?'
'Melina telephoned me and said that her husband wanted to
meet me at my lodge up there to discuss a business deal. Then
she called Demiris and told him that I had asked for a meeting
up there. When we arrived, we found that we had nothing to
say to each other.' ^
'And the meeting took place in the middle of the afternoon
at the established time of Mrs Demiris' death?'
'That's right.'
'It's a four-hour drive from Aero-Corinth to the beach house.
I've had it timed.' Napoleon Chotas was looking at the jury. 'So,

there is no way that Constantin Demiris could have been at Aero-Corinth at three and been back in Athens before seven.'
Chotas turned back to Spyros Lambrou. 'You are under oath, Mr Lambrou. Is what you have just told this court the truth?'
'Yes. So help me God.'
Napoleon Chotas swivelled his chair toward the jury.
'Ladies and gentlemen,' he rasped, 'there is only one verdict
you can possibly reach.' They were straining forward to catch
his words. 'Not guilty. If the State had claimed that the defendant
had hired someone to kill his wife, then there might have been
some small measure of doubt. But, on the contrary, their whole
case is based upon so-called evidence that the defendant was in
that room, that he himself murdered his wife. The learned justices will instruct you that in this trial two essential elements
must be proven: motive and opportunity.
'Not motive or opportunity, but motive and opportunity. In law, they are Siamese twins inseparable.
Ladies and gentlemen,
the defendant may or may not have had a motive, but this witness has proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that the defendant was nowhere near the scene of the crime when it occurred.'

The jury was out for four hours. Constantin Demiris watched as
they filed back into the courtroom. He looked pale and anxious.
Chotas was not looking at the jury. He was looking at Constantin
Demiris' face. Demiris' aplomb and arrogance were gone. He was a man facing death.
The Chief Justice asked, 'Has the jury reached a verdict?'

'We have, Your Honor.' The jury foreman held up a piece of

paper.

'Would the bailiff get the verdict please.'

The bailiff walked over to the juror, took the piece of
paper
and handed it to the judge. He opened the piece of paper
and
looked up. 'The jury finds the defendant not guilty.'

There was pandemonium in the courtroom. People were
getting to their feet, some of them applauding, some of
them
hissing.

The expression on Demiris' face was ecstatic. He took a
deep
breath, rose and walked over to Napoleon Chotas. 'You did
it,'
he said. 'I owe you a lot.'

Chotas looked into his eyes. 'Not anymore. I'm very rich
and
you're very poor. Come on. We're going to celebrate.'

Constantin Demiris pushed Chotas' wheelchair through the
milling crowd, out past the reporters, to the parking lot.
Chotas
pointed to a sedan parked at the entrance. 'My car's over
there.'

Demiris wheeled him up to the door. 'Don't you have a
chauffeur?'

'I don't need one. I had this car specially fitted so I
could drive
it myself. Help me in.'

Demiris opened the door and lifted Chotas into the
driver's
seat. He folded the wheelchair and put it in the back
seat.
Demiris got into the car next to Chotas.

'You're still the greatest lawyer in the world,' Constantin
Demiris smiled.

'Yes.' Napoleon Chotas put the car in gear and started to drive. 'What are you going to do now, Costa?'

Demiris said carefully, 'Oh, I'll manage to get by somehow.' With a hundred million dollars I can build up my empire again. Demiris chuckled. 'Spyros is going to be pretty upset when he
finds out how you tricked him.'

'There's nothing he can do about it,' Chotas assured him. The
contract he signed gives him a company that's worthless.'

They were headed toward the mountains. Demiris watched as Chotas moved the levers that controlled the gas pedal and the
brake. 'You handle this very well.'

'You learn to do what you have to,' Chotas said. They were
climbing up a narrow mountain road.
'Where are we going?'
'I have a little house at the top here. We'll have a glass of
champagne and I'll Have a taxi take you back to town. You know, Costa, I've been thinking. Everything that's happened
. . . Noelle's death and Larry Douglas' death. And poor Stavros.
None of it was about money, was it?' He turned to glance at
Demiris. 'It was all about hate. Hate and love. You loved Noelle.'
'Yes,' Demiris said. 'I loved Noelle.'
'I loved her, too,' Chotas said. 'You didn't know that, did
you?'
Demiris looked at him in surprise. 'No.'
'And yet I helped you murder her. I've never forgiven myself

for that. Have you forgiven yourself, Costa?'
'She deserved what she got.'
'I think in the end we all deserve what we get. There's something
I haven't told you, Costa. That fire ever since the night
of that fire, I've been in excruciating pain. The doctors tried to
put me back together again but it didn't really work. I'm too
badly crippled.' He pushed a lever that speeded up the car. They
were starting to move fast along hairpin curves, climbing higher
and higher. The Aegean Sea appeared far below them.
'As a matter of fact,' Chotas said hoarsely, 'I'm in so much
pain that my life really isn't worth living anymore.' He pushed
the lever again and the car began to go faster.
'Slow down,' Demiris said. 'You're going to . . .'
'I've stayed alive this long for you. I've decided that you and
I are going to end it together.'
Demiris turned to stare at him, horrified. 'What are you talking
about? Slow down, man. You'll kill us both.'
'That's right,' Chotas said. He moved the lever again. The car
leapt forward.
'You're crazy!' Demiris said. 'You're rich. You don't want to
die.'
Chotas' scarred lips turned into a horrific imitation of a smile.
'No, I'm not rich. You know who's rich? Your friend, Sister

Theresa. I've given all your money to the convent at loannina.'
They were racing toward a blind curve on the steep.mountain
road.
'Stop the car!' Demiris screamed. He tried to wrest the

wheel
from Chotas but it was impossible.
till give you anything you want,' Demiris yelled. 'Stop!'
Chotas said, 'I have what I want.'
The next moment they were flying over the cliff, down the steep mountainside, the car tumbling end over end in a grotesque
pirouette of death, until finally at the bottom it crashed into the
sea. There was a tremendous explosion, and then the deep silence of eternity.